98th Congress
2d Session

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No. 81

D-DAY PLUS 40 YEARS

REPORT

ON

OBSERVANCE OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY INVASION

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

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FOREWORD

On June 6, 1944, a military force of 153,000 American, British, and Canadian soldiers launched the most massive assault of its kind ever attempted in the history of the world. Their goal was the liberation of Europe and the preservation and restoration of freedom and dignity in the western world.

The D-Day assault involved 5,000 naval vessels and 11,000 sorties of Allied aircraft. Three divisions of airborne troops, the 82nd and the 101st of the United States and the 6th of Britain, dropped inland and captured key points which German reinforcements were prevented from using.

The five separate beaches where the troops landed were fiercely guarded by the German defenders. The approaches were filled with underwater obstacles. The beaches were heavily mined and strewn with barbed wire. High ground above the beaches were commanded by German artillery.

The loss in both men and material was high. Total Allied casualties of D-Day totaled 10,200, of which American troops suffered 1,465 killed, 3,184 wounded, 1,928 missing-in-action and 26 captured.

Few events have had such a resounding impact on the course of American and European history. The D-Day invasion was massive, brilliant and successful. We owe so much to our servicemen and Allies for their courage and extraordinary efforts in bringing about the defeat of Hitler's armies.

In recognition of the 40th anniversary of this historic event, the Congress in approving H.J. Res. 487 (Public Law 98-311), designated June 6, 1984, as D-Day National Remembrance. On May 31, 1984, the President issued a proclamation pursuant to Public Law 98-311, calling upon the people of the United States to commemorate the valor of those who served in the D-Day assault forces. A copy of the proclamation appears on p. 6 of this document.

In observance of this day, I led a delegation of 18 Members to go to France to represent the entire House of Representatives. The events had a special meaning to a number of members of the group who either participated in the invasion or saw action in the European theater during the war. Others in the delegation were involved in combat situations in the Pacific theater.

It was a trip that was meant as a tribute to the brave individuals who successfully completed an impossible task. Theirs is a story that is a powerful part of our past and our future. A principal reason for the success of the trip was the cooperation and support provided by Secretary of Defense Weinberger and Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, Jr. Lieutenant General David Grange, the overall coordinator of the 40th anniversary activities, should be commended for his outstanding efforts in coordinating all the D-Day events. I especially want to thank Major General Charles

Franklin, the Chief of Legislative Liaison, and Brigadier General Bill Roche of Legislative Liaison, Department of the Army, who were most cooperative and helpful in coordinating the many activities vital to the success of the delegation visit. I would be remiss in my duty if I didn't single out for high commendation the contribution made by Col. Wendell Black, Lt. Col. Larry Ayres, and Maj. Warren Taylor who worked almost continuously to make our trip so pleasant and enjoyable. Everyone was highly impressed with Colonel Black and his associates and I take this opportunity to officially extend the thanks of the entire delegation for everything they did to make the trip one which none of us will ever forget.

The occasion provided the opportunity for the delegation to visit with the National Commanders of the national veterans organizations in the United States, together with many veterans who participated in the battles on that day who were also in Normandy for the occasion.

Because the memory of many is too often pitifully short, it is important that we set down in official form a brief account of what took place on D-Day, June 6, 1944, and what was said and done by the President and other heads of state who traveled to Normany 40 years later to pay homage to those who had won the day against the overpowering forces of tyranny. Accordingly, I am including in this document copies of the statements of the heads of state who participated in the 40th anniversary ceremonies, statements made by heads of state on D-Day, June 6, 1944, a description by the American Battle Monuments Commission of the American cemetery and memorials on Normany, and related information and material.

I hereby order this account be published as an official print of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives.

G. V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

98TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. J. RES. 487

To designate June 6, 1984, as "D-day National Remembrance"

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 21, 1984

Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BARNES, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BEVILL, Mr. BONIOR of Michigan, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CHAPPIE, Mr. CLARKE, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DWYER of New Jersey, Mr. EVANS of Illinois, Mr. FORSYTHE, Mr. RALPH M. HALL, Mr. HAWKINS, Mr. HORTON, Mr. HOWARD, Mr. HYDE, Mr. KASICH, Mr. KINDNESS, Mr. KOGOVSEK, Mr. KOSTMAYER, Mr. LAGOMARSINO, Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Mr. LEWIS of Florida, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. LONG of Maryland, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCGRATH, Mr. MADIGAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MONTGOMERY, Mr. OWENS, Mr. O'BRIEN, Mr. RATCHFORD, Mr. RICHARDSON, Mr. ROE, Mr. SABO, Mr. SCHEUER, Mr. SIMON, Mr. SISISKY, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. STANGELAND, Mr. VANDER JAGT, Mr. WILLIAMS of Ohio, Mr. WON PAT, Mr. VENTO, and Mr. WORTLEY) introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service

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JOINT RESOLUTION

To designate June 6, 1984, as "D-day National Remembrance".

Whereas June 6, 1984, marks the fortieth anniversary of D-day, the day of the beginning of the Allied assault at Normandy, France;

Whereas the D day assault was the most extensive amphibious operation ever to occur, involving on the first day of the operation five thousand ships, eleven thousand sorties of Allied aircraft, and one hundred and fifty-three thousand American, British, and Canadian troops;

Whereas American troops suffered significant losses during the assault, including one thousand four hundred and sixty-five dead, three thousand one hundred and eighty-four wounded, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight missing in action, and twenty six captured; and

Whereas the D-day assault was among the most critical events of World War II since its success led ultimately to the Allied victory in Europe: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That June 6, 1984, is designated as "D-day National Remembrance", and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Public Law 98-311
98th Congress

Joint Resolution

May 31, 1984
[H.J. Res. 487]

To designate June 6, 1984, as "D-day National Remembrance"

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Approved May 31, 1984.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 487:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 130 (1984):
Apr. 11, considered and passed House.
May 24, considered and passed Senate.

Presidential Documents

Proclamation 5206 of May 31, 1984

D-Day National Remembrance

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Tuesday, June 6, 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower made a dramatic announcement from London:

"People of Western Europe: A landing was made this morning on the coast of France by troops of the Allied Expeditionary Force . . . The hour of your liberation is approaching."

Operation Overlord, the invasion of Adolf Hitler's "Fortress Europe" forty years ago, thrust approximately 130,000 American and Allied troops under General Eisenhower's command onto beaches now known to history as Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword along the coast of Normandy, France. Another 23,000 British and American airborne forces were parachuted or taken by glider to secure critical inland areas. Some 11,000 sorties were flown by allied aircraft, and innumerable sabotage operations were carried out by Resistance forces behind the lines.

On that day and in the ensuing weeks, the soldiers, sailors, and airmen of the assault forces, and the men and women who supported the landing, displayed great skill, unwavering tenacity, and courage. The Americans who landed at Omaha Beach—where sharp bluffs, strong defenses, and the presence of a powerful German division produced enormous difficulties—wrote an especially brave and noble chapter in the military history of the United States.

Opposed by bitter enemy resistance, the landing forces gained the beaches at great sacrifice, pushed inland, and expanded their beachheads. Feats of leadership and courage by individuals and small groups turned the tide. The great battles of 1944 that followed, from the hedgerows to the Ardennes, hold a place of highest honor in the tradition of the United States Armed Forces. The brave, often heroic deeds of our fellow Americans and others in the Allied Armed Forces set in motion the liberation of Europe and brought unity and pride to all free people.

Welded by the experiences of war, the old world and the new formed an enduring alliance which shared the rebuilding of Europe and forged a shield that has kept the peace in Europe for almost forty years. A common dedication to remain strong can continue that peace which these brave men and women fought so hard to secure.

In recognition of the fortieth anniversary of this historic event, the Congress, by H.J. Res. 487, has designated June 6, 1984, as "D-day National Remembrance" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 6, 1984, as D-day National Remembrance, a national day commemorating the fortieth anniversary of D-day. I call upon the people of the United States to commemorate the valor of those who served in the D-day assault forces with appropriate ceremonies and observances.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

LOCATION	5 JUNE 1984	6 JUNE 1984
St.Laurent sur Mer	1700- Inauguration of 2nd Inf Div Street and wreath-laying ceremony at Indian Head Monument.	
Trevieres	1100- Wreath-laying ceremony and Banquet.	
Vierville sur Mer	1100- Ceremony at National Guard memorial.	[illegible]-2110 Torchlight parade with wreaths being placed at various monuments, termination at National Guard Memorial.
U.S. Fighter Pilots Association	JUNE 4-6 Visits to different sites of temporary landing strips used during Normandy invasion. Official ceremony at Normandy Cemetery 5 June 1984.	
406th Fighter Group	JUNE 4-6 Various ceremonies throughout Normandy Beachhead areas.	
Saint Lo	JUNE 7 1000- Wreath-laying ceremony at Major Howie Monument and Banquet.	
Bayeux	JUNE 7 1030-1100 Commemoration ceremonies and parade. Banquet.	
Cherbourg	JUNE 26-27 Liberation ceremonies.	
La Queue Les Yvelines	JUNE 1 Flag-raising, Plaque dedication, Antique Military Vehicle Parade, Dinner.	

LOCATION	5 JUNE 1984	6 JUNE 1984
Omaha Beach		1145-1215 Wreath-laying sponsored by Landing Committee. 1510-1640 Presidential commemoration ceremony. (US/FR)
Pointe du Hoc	1400- Wreath-laying ceremony with cliff assault by a Special Forces unit.	1100-1130 Wreath-laying ceremony sponsored by Landing Committee. 1420-1500 Presidential dedication of Ranger plaques.
Utah Beach	1900- Monument dedication.	1655-1810 8-Nation commemoration ceremony. (US,FR,CA,UK,BE,NE,NO,LU)
Sainte Mere Eglise	1700 (+/-) Airborne company jump sponsored by town.	0900-1000 Commemoration ceremony sponsored by Landing Committee and town.
Carentan		1015-1200 Wreath-laying ceremony. Presentation of Plaque to General Taylor and the 101st Abn Div.
Suresnes		1000-1100 and 1930-2200 American Cemetery wreath-laying.
Bernieres sur Mer	2100- Parade sponsored by Landing Committee.	
Caen	1500- Landing Committee commemoration ceremony.	
Englesqueville la Percee	Wreath-laying ceremony at 147th Engr Cmbt Bn Monument.	

CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hon. G. V. (Sonny) Montgomery (D-MS), Chairman.
Hon. Ike Andrews (D-NC).
Hon. Robert E. Badham (R-CA) and Mrs. Badham.
Hon. Tom Bevill (D-AL) and Mrs. Bevill.
Hon. Beverly B. Byron (D-MD).
Hon. Sam Gibbons (D-FL) and Mrs. Gibbons.
Hon. Sam B. Hall, Jr. (D-TX) and Mrs. Hall.
Hon. John Paul Hammerschmidt (R-AR) and Mrs. Hammerschmidt.
Hon. Marjorie S. Holt (R-MD) and Mr. Holt.
Hon. Tom Lantos (D-CA) and Mrs. Lantos.
Hon. Delbert Latta (R-OH) and Mrs. Latta.
Hon. John T. Myers (R-IN) and Mrs. Myers.
Hon. Bill Nichols (D-AL) and Mrs. Nichols.
Hon. Harold Rogers (R-KY) and Mrs. Rogers.
Hon. Toby Roth (R-WI) and Mrs. Roth.
Hon. Sam Stratton (D-NY).
Hon. Chalmers P. Wylie (R-OH) and Mrs. Wylie.
Hon. Robert A. Young (D-MO).

OTHER OFFICIALS

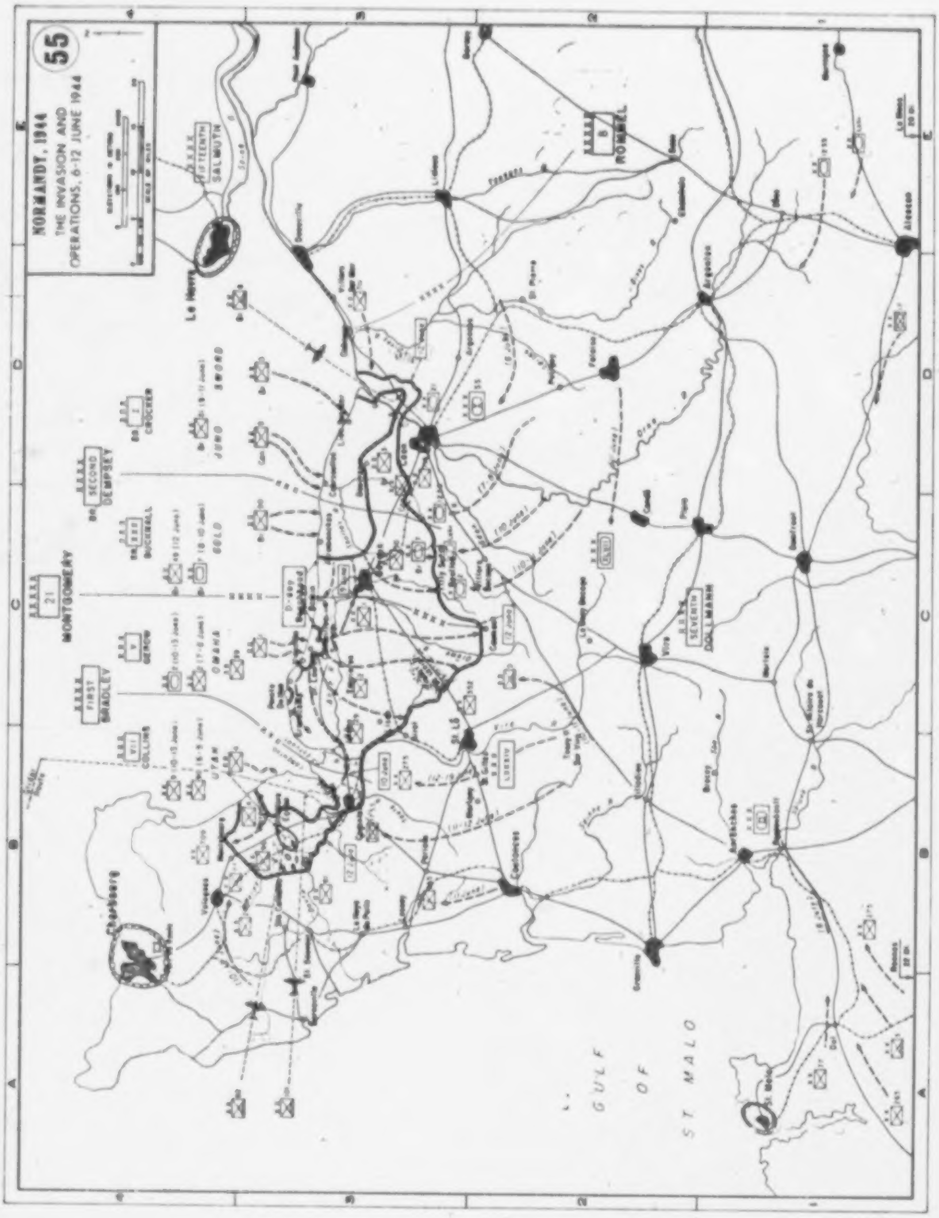
Hon. Teno Roncalio, former Member from Wyoming.
Mr. Jack Russ, Sergeant at Arms, U.S. House of Representatives.
Hon. Harry N. Walters, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs and Mrs. Walters.

VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE STAFF

Mr. Andre Clemandot, Jr.
Mr. Francis W. Stover.

ARMY MILITARY PERSONNEL

Brigadier General Bill Roche.
Colonel Wendell W. Black.
Colonel Richard F. Riley.
Lieutenant Colonel Larry Ayres.
Major Warren Taylor.
Staff Sergeant Charles E. Offutt.
Staff Sergeant Heyward Thompson.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NORMANDY, 1944
THE INVASION AND
OPERATIONS, 6-12 JUNE 1944
Le Havre
FIFTEENTH
SALMUTH
Cherbourg
MONTGOMERY
21
FIRST
BRADLEY
SECOND
DEMPSEY
VII
COLLINS
V
GEROW
BUCKNALL
CROCKER
UTAH
OMAHA
GOLD
JUNO
SWORD
Caen
Bayeux
St Lô
Carentan
Coutances
Granville
Avranches
Vire
Falaise
Argentan
Alençon
Lisieux
Flers
B
ROMMEL
SEVENTH
DOLLMANN
GULF
OF
ST MALO
St Malo
Dol
Rennes

REPORT OF HON. G.V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY, TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 21, 1984

INTRODUCTION

During the period June 2-6, 1984, I headed a delegation of 18 Members to visit Normandy, France. It was on June 6, 1944, that the battle of Normandy began. It is generally agreed that D-Day 1944 was the most historic battle of World War II and the most massive invasion in military history. Accordingly, the primary purpose of the visit was to represent the U.S. House of Representatives at the various 40th anniversary ceremonies, and to tour the battlefields and monuments in the Normandy area, where the course of history was changed by the successful invasion on D-Day. I would note that the cemeteries and monuments in the Normandy area come under the jurisdiction of the Veterans' Affairs committee.

The visit also provided the opportunity to meet with officials who administer a memorial owned by the United States Government and dedicated to the memory of General John J. Pershing, Chief of Staff of U.S. Forces during World War I. Called the Pershing Memorial, it is located in Paris, France.

BACKGROUND

More than 16 million Americans served in the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II. There were many battles fought during that war all over the world in defense of freedom. The most crucial battle occurred on June 6, 1944, at Normandy, France, when American and Allied forces joined together to regain a foothold in Europe. There were over 153,000 troops, 5,000 naval vessels and 11,000 sorties of Allied aircraft in this battle. Included in the assault troops were three divisions of airborne troops, the 82nd and 101st of the United States and the 6th of Britain. The skies were literally dotted with planes and the sea filled with ships, which were transporting Allied troops to land on a strongly fortified coast. In a very short period, the Allies had driven from the air the once-vaunted Luftwaffe, and the German Navy from the sea. As the Allied troops moved inland after that first day, the flame of hope was rekindled for freedom-loving people all over the world.

In this regard, resolutions were introduced in the House to designate June 6, 1984, as D-Day National Remembrance Day. H.J. Res. 487, introduced by the Honorable Tom Lantos of California, a member of the delegation who was active in the anti-Nazi underground during his youth in his native Hungary and came to the United States following the war. H.J. Res. 487 was signed by the President on May 31, 1984, as Public Law 98–311, which designated June 6, 1984, as D-Day National Rememberance Day.

ITINERARY

The delegation represented the U.S. House of Representatives at the observances of D-Day. The delegation visited the battlefields of Normandy, including U.S. landing sites of the battles that occurred on June 6, 1944. A number of members of the group participated in the invasion or were active in the European theater during World War II, while others served in battles in the Pacific theater.

For example, Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt served during World War II in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater, where he received many decorations for flying aircraft "over the Burma Hump" into China. Congressman Sam Stratton, also a World War II veteran, was a naval officer in the Pacific Theater assigned to the 41st Inf. Division, to interrogate prisoners-of-war.

While Congresswoman Marjorie Holt is not a veteran, her husband who accompanied her on the trip, flew 33 missions on a B-17 over Europe as a radio operator. Congressman Del Latta served in the U.S. Marines, and his brother fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Congressman Sam Hall served three years in the U.S. Air Force. Congresswoman Beverly Byron is the daughter of a naval officer, Capt. Harry Butcher, who served as Chief Naval Aide to General Eisenhower for three years.

Younger members of the delegation who went along as observers were: Congressman Robert Badham, a Korean veteran; Congressmen Toby Roth and Harold Rogers, who served in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam era.

The week's events culminated on June 6th with a memorial service at the U.S. Cemetery at Normandy at which President Reagan spoke. He was accompanied by the President of France, Francois Mitterrand. Members of the delegation were guests of honor at this ceremony which was televised by the three major U.S. networks, as well as networks in allied countries.

SCOPE OF REPORT

This report is not intended to serve as an official statement regarding the events that occurred during the 40th anniversary of the commemoration of D-Day. The delegation visited a number of U.S. facilities, the majority of which are under the administration of the American Battle Monuments Commission. In this regard, the delegation had the opportunity to evaluate the organization and its administration of these memorials, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the administration and execution of this entity of our Government having responsibilities established and funded by Congress.

CHRONOLOGY

Sunday, June 3, 1984

Our host for the day was Brigadier General John W. Donaldson, European Office, American Battle Monuments Commission, who provided the delegation with a tour of the Normandy area. We stopped at a number of historic sites, including Omaha Beach, Pointe Du Hoc, Vierville, the U.S. Cemetery, and Bayeux.

There were still many reminders of the war years in this area, especially along the coast where gun emplacements and bunkers still stand. General Donaldson was an excellent guide and provided a detailed description which helped make it possible to visualize the enormous sacrifice made by U.S. troops when they stormed ashore on Omaha Beach on D-Day.

Although it was not a major undertaking in the terms of numbers of soldiers and equipment involved, Pointe Du Hoc serves as the best example of courage under fire. It was Pointe Du Hoc, with German guns situated thereon, which became a symbol of American heroism. A 100-foot cliff was captured by the U.S. Ranger Battalion led by Col. James Rudder. The Rangers used rope ladders and hook ladders borrowed from fire fighters in Britain to climb this cliff. Despite the heaviest of losses, the Rangers took possession of the cliff on schedule.

Close by Omaha Beach is the National Guard Monument at Vierville-sur-mer. The National Guard Monument at Normandy was created and built by members of the Army and Air National Guard to commemorate the heroism of the U.S. Forces which landed on D-Day, June 6, 1944, to launch the liberation of France and, indeed, western Europe. The monument is maintained through the Historical Society of the Militia and National Guard. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the monument. It was dedicated on June 6, 1969, and is situated atop a battered pillbox overlooking Omaha Beach in the landing area of the 116th Infantry Regiment, the lead element of the 29th (Blue and Gray) Infantry Division on that fateful morning some 40 years ago.

Not far from Omaha Beach is the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. There are 9,386 war dead buried here, with 307 of the headstones marked "unknown". The most famous Americans buried here are President Theodore Roosevelt's sons, Quentin and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., who lie side-by-side. In 33 instances, two brothers lie side-by-side. In another instance, a father and son lie side-by-side. Almost all lost their lives in the landing operation.

The memorial is a moving tribute to those who made the supreme sacrifice. A 22-foot bronze statue is located on the platform of the memorial—"The Spirit of American Youth" rising out of the waves has captured this feeling for all time. The U.S. Cemetery and other memorials being cared for by the American Battle Monuments Commission deserve special praise. The cemetery and other areas which are the responsibility of the American Battle Monuments Commission that we visited were in excellent condition. I especially want to thank Brigadier General John W. Donaldson, who is in charge of the European office of the American memorials and overseas military cemeteries, for his contribution in making our tour of the Normandy area so successful. He was most ably assisted by the Superintendent of the U.S. Cemetery in Normandy, Mr. Joseph P. Rivers, and the Assistant Superintendent, Mr. William K. Saylors, who were continuously present during our visits to Normandy and provided assistance to all members of the delegation. The American Battle Monuments Commission did an outstanding job on this historic occasion.

On the east side of the memorial is a semicircular Garden of the Missing. There are 1,557 names inscribed on the wall of this lovely and beautiful landscaped garden of those who gave their lives in this region, but whose remains have not been recovered, or if recovered, not identified. The names are in alphabetical order and represent every State in the Union and the District of Columbia. A few came from England, Canada, and Scotland.

By way of contrast, the delegation visited two additional cemeteries later in the day. The first was the German cemetery in La Combe. Here we were told there are over 21,000 German soldiers buried. There was a somber atmosphere to this cemetery, its sad beauty and black granite crosses contrasted sharply with the gleaming Latin white crosses and Stars of David in the U.S. cemetery. Later, the delegation viewed the British cemetery, located in Bayeux. Here the British have interred their fallen heroes in a setting more like the U.S. cemetery. Instead of crosses, the British have erected upright stones similar to those in Arlington National Cemetery and other U.S. national cemeteries, with flowers and shrubs on either side of the stones.

Throughout the tour, the delegation was privileged to have the benefit of the personal experiences of three of the Members who had landed in Normandy on D-Day. They were the Honorable Sam Gibbons of Florida, Robert A. Young of Missouri, and former Member Teno Roncalio of Wyoming.

Congressman Gibbons was a Captain of the 501st Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division in the initial assault force which landed by parachute in the darkness before the assault by sea and land began in Normandy. Congressman Young, an infantry man assigned to the amphibious engineers, went ashore at Utah Beach on D-Day, and former Congressman Roncalio was a member of the 1st Division, the "Big Red One" which stormed ashore during the first minutes of D-Day on Omaha Beach. All three recounted in detail their experiences during this crucial period, and gave a perspective to the tour which could not be matched.

The tour took the delegation through the countryside with its hedgerows which we were told have not changed. We stopped in Bayeux, the first town to be liberated in 1944. Here there is a museum devoted to the history of the Battle of Normandy and a monument commemorating Bayeux's return to freedom.

The people of Normandy were most hospitable, courteous and supportive throughout the tour. They obviously like Americans and are still deeply appreciative for their liberation from the Germans.

Monday, June 4, 1984

As indicated previously, a number of members of the delegation participated in battles in the European Theater during World War II. Some of the most fierce battles were fought in northern France and in the Ardennes campaign. Some members of the delegation flew to Luxembourg to visit the U.S. cemetery in Luxembourg, where more than 5,000 American soldiers are buried. The most famous person buried here is General George S. Patton, Jr., Commander, U.S. Third Army.

Congressman William Nichols, an artillery officer in the 8th Infantry Division of General Patton's 3rd Army, placed a wreath on the grave of General Patton in behalf of the delegation. Congressman Nichols, who came ashore at Normandy, participated in three major campaigns in Europe, and was severely wounded in the battle of Hurtgen Forest in Germany in November 1944. Another member of the delegation who served in one of General Patton's divisions was Congressman Tom Bevill who served with the 5th Armored Division. Congressman John Myers also served as an infantry officer in nearby France and Belgium.

Most of those buried in this cemetery gave their lives in the so-called Battle of the Bulge during the Ardennes campaign, which stopped the German counter-attack in December 1944.

Congressmen Chalmers Wylie and Ike Andrews also participated in the Battle of the Bulge. Congressman Wylie, who went ashore four days after D-Day, served with the 30th Infantry Division through five campaigns, one of which helped liberate Paris. Congressman Andrews was a forward artillery observer for the 69th Division. Both were awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in action.

We were provided a tour of the cemetery by the superintendent, Mr. Even Hubai, and his assistant, Donny Sykes. The cemetery is well cared for, in excellent condition, and because it includes the remains of General Patton, is visited by more Americans than any other U.S. cemetery in Europe. Accordingly, the grave of General Patton is situated to provide easy access to visitors.

We visited the battlefield in Herrlisheim, near Colmar and were warmly greeted by Mayor Buschek of Herrlisheim and other officials.

Herrlisheim was one of the focal points of the "Colmar Pocket", which witnessed some of the bloodiest fighting of World War II. The division in which I served, the 12th Armored, was actively engaged in this area. So it was a sentimental visit for me as I reminisced with Mayor Buschek and others about the decisive battles which broke the grip of the German Army in this key area.

In the afternoon, I visited, together with officials of the U.S. Embassy, American Battle Monuments Commission, and staff, the Pershing Memorial located in Paris. The memorial is a building which is owned by the U.S. Government. It honors General John J. Pershing, Commander, U.S. Troops, World War I, and all who served with him. The individuals in charge of operating the memorial for the U.S. Government, the Pershing Hall Operating Committee, provided a tour of the building and a briefing of their activities. The management of this building is presently under review. Therefore several proposals were presented by individuals representing different groups regarding the permanent management of this memorial. The committee will be considering these proposals which were presented by the principals involved in operating the memorial, as well as other options before the committee regarding this memorial.

Tuesday, June 5, 1984

In the morning, the delegation toured Utah Beach. A representative from the American Battlefield Monument Commission provided us with a vivid account of the landings on Utah Beach on D-Day, through which were to pour thousands of American troops, material, and equipment. Utah Beach is situated west of Omaha Beach and, unlike Omaha Beach, those who landed here were faced with a sea wall rather than hills to climb or cliffs to scale. Utah Beach provided access to the roads to the north and west, making the area a key to later operations as our forces moved inland to encircle and cut off the German forces. The VII Corps of the U.S. Army was assigned the task of seizing and holding the area behind Utah Beach as part of the goal of capturing Cherbourg as soon as possible. There is a Utah Beach monument which commemorates the achievements and sacrifices of the American forces of the VII Corps who participated in the landing and liberation of the peninsula from June 6 to July 16, 1944. Also located around the site of the Utah Beach monument stands a liberty way milestone and a monument to the U.S. 4th Division. Here also is an impressive monument to the Americans of the 1st Engineer Special Brigade, which is a former German blockhouse. On the north side of the esplande, in front of the Engineer Monument, is a small stake honoring the men of the 90th Division.

Two of the nearest towns to Utah Beach are Carentan and St. Mere Eglise, both on the main road from Cherbourg to Paris. St. Mere Eglise is the town American paratroopers landed on June 6th, with many landing on the area adjacent to the church. In order to dislodge the Germans in the church tower, the Americans machine-gunned the interior of the church. We were told that traces are still visible near the pulpit and on some of the arches of the nave. Since there were so many visitors in this small town, the doors to the church were locked. However, we could view the stained-glass window over the portal which shows the historic landing of the American paratroopers during the night before the D-Day landings. This is the only church in France having a stained-glass window offered by a foreign active military unit—the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. At the top and center of the window is the badge of the paratroopers, with the lower center, that of glider troops surrounded by Faith, Hope, and Charity. On the left side of the glass is the divisional patch of the 82nd Division—"A.A." which stands for All American.

The other airborne division to land behind the fortified German lines in this area was the 101st Airborne, of which Mr. Gibbons was a member. Its mission was to take Carentan and control the coastal area as far as Poupeville. The delegation was provided many human interest stories of the pain and suffering, as well as some infrequent lighter moments endured by our troops, with individual Normandy homes being identified that were used by American forces during that period.

In the afternoon, the delegation returned to Pointe Du Hoc for a number of ceremonies. Battle-scarred Pointe Du Hoc remains today exactly as the Rangers left it in June of 1944. The only addition is a large stone monument erected in memorial tribute to the men who fought and died there by a dedicated grateful group of Frenchmen. Pointe Du Hoc has been given in perpetuity to the United States, and is administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission. On this day there was a re-enactment of the climb up the cliff by soldiers of the 10th Special Forces of the U.S. Army. General Eisenhower, who also visited this point following World War II, summed it up when he said: "It took guts to get up that cliff that day". Following the re-enactment, a ceremony was held by the French to present a plaque to be placed on the stone monument. Many Rangers who had participated in the assault on June 6, 1944, were in attendance, together with members of Ranger battalions on active duty in the Armed Forces. The leader of the Rangers on June 6, 1944, Col. James Rudder, died a few years ago, but his widow occupied a seat of honor at this ceremony.

The delegation witnessed a parachute jump by 150 paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division and 30 paratroopers from a British unit. This event was attended by many dignitaries who had led the attack on D-Day, including General J. Lawton Collins, U.S. Army, retired; Gen. James Gavin, U.S. Army (ret.) and General James Van Fleet, U.S. Army, (ret.), who led an attack force. The paratroopers provided the delegation with a re-enactment jump which was not only spectacular, but demonstrated that today's paratroopers land where they are supposed to, notwithstanding the prevailing winds and other obstacles they may encounter. (A large number of paratroopers missed their landing targets in 1944 by considerable margins).

Wednesday, June 6, 1984

The highlight of the trip occurred at the U.S. cemetery in Normandy on this date. President Reagan, accompanied by President Mitterrand of France, delivered a short, stirring address commemorating the sacrifice made by American soldiers on June 6, 1944. Major American television networks and European networks recorded the event, which made it possible for millions to share in this glorious occasion.

The delegation arrived early for the Presidential memorial service where we were joined by a delegation of Members of the United States Senate. The Senate group, which was led by Senator Strom Thurmond, (D-SC), included Senators Lowell Weicker, (R-CT); John Warner, (R-VA); and former Senator Howard Cannon, (D-NV). This provided an opportunity to meet with commanders of all the major national veterans organizations or their representatives who were present for the ceremony. In addition, the delegation visited with hundreds of American veterans and servicemen who came to Normandy for this ceremony.

The spirit and meaning of this 40th anniversary was captured by the President when he stated in his remarks: "Mr. President, distinguished guests, we stand today at a place of battle, one that 40 years ago saw and felt the worst of war. Men bled and died here for a few feet of or inches of sand as bullets and shellfire cut through their ranks." About them, General Omar Bradley later said, "Every man who set foot on Omaha Beach that day was a hero."

No speech can adequately portray their suffering, their sacrifice, their heroism. President Lincoln once reminded us that through their deeds, the dead of battle have spoken more eloquently for themselves than any of the living ever could. But we can only honor them by rededicating ourselves to the cause for which they gave a last full measure of devotion.

Today, we do rededicate ourselves to that cause. And, at this place of honor, we are humbled by the realization of how much so many gave to the cause of freedom and to their fellow man.

NORMANDY AMERICAN CEMETERIES AND MEMORIALS VISITED BY DELEGATION

NORMANDY AMERICAN CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL

The Normandy American Cemetery site was chosen because of its historical location on top of a cliff overlooking famous Omaha Beach which was the scene of the greatest amphibious troop landing in history. The official name "Normandy" is derived from the name of the province in which the cemetery is located.

The cemetery site covers 172 acres. Use of the site, granted in perpetuity by the French Government in gratitude of their liberation in WW II, includes a right-of-way one-half mile long, leading from highway N-814 to the cemetery entrance.

The approach road to the cemetery starts at the large stone directional arrow on highway N-814 and runs between characteristic Normandy hedgerows to the main gate in the southeast corner of the cemetery. To the west of the gate is the utilities area; in this area are the deep wells which supply the cemetery water; here, too, are the reservoirs and pumping station. Beyond the visitors' building are the graves area, the memorial, the chapel, and the sea.

The maintenance of the cemetery and memorial is the responsibility of the American Battle Monuments Commission. This Commission was created by an act of Congress in March 1923 for the purpose of construction and permanent maintenance of the cemeteries and memorials on foreign soil. Construction of this cemetery and memorial was completed in 1956 and dedicated on 19 July of that year. The architects for the cemetery and memorial were Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson of Philadelphia, Pa. The landscape architect was Markley Stevenson, also of Philadelphia.

There are 9,386 American war dead buried here; 307 of the headstones mark the graves of "Unknowns". The remains of approximately 14,000 others originally buried in this region were returned home at the request of their next of kin. There are also buried here, side-by-side, a father and his son, and in 33 instances two brothers rest side-by-side. Most of the dead who are buried here gave their lives in the landing operations and in the establishment of the beachhead. The headstones are of white Italian marble; a Star of David for those of Jewish faith and a Latin cross for all others.

The memorial consists of a semi-circular colonnade with a loggia at each end. On the platform immediately west of the colonnade is a 22-foot bronze statue, "The Spirit of American Youth" rising from the waves, a tribute to those who gave their lives in these operations. Around its base is the inscription "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord". The sculptor was Donald De Lue of New York City; the bronze was cast in Milan by the Battaglia Foundry. The Memorial is built of Vaurion, a French limestone from the Cote d'Or region; the plinths and steps are of Ploumanach granite from Brittany. The pavement on the platform between the loggias is faced with pebbles taken from the invasion beach below the cliff.

On the walls within the south loggia are three maps engraved in the stone and embellished with colored enamels. The largest, oriented with south at the top, portrays landings on 6 June 1944, the establishment of the firm beachhead, the liberation of Cherbourg and St. Lo, and the subsequent attack by which our forces broke out of the beachhead. The map on the west wall vividly depicts the air operations prior to the landings, including the isolation of the beachhead area by the destruction of all routes of access from the interior of France; the map also records the major air operations in the beachhead after the landings. The map on the east wall shows the Naval plan for the landings and the manner in which it was executed. These maps were designed by Robert Foster of New York City from data furnished by the American Battle Monuments Commission. They were executed by Maurice Schmit of Paris. The panels in the ceilings of the loggias are of blue ceramic by Gentil & Bourdet of Paris. The west face of the loggias bears the dedicatory inscription, together with a French translation.

At the entrance of each loggia are two large bronze urns, also designed and sculptured in high relief by Donald De Lue and cast by Marinelli foundry of Florence, Italy. There are two identical pairs. On the face of one urn a dying warrier holding the sword with which he has fought the good fight is astride a charging horse which symbolizes war. The Angel of the Lord supports him and receives his spirit. On the reverse side of this urn a woman kneels, holding her child, beside the wreath-decorated grave of a soldier. About them shines the star of eternal life. This composition is dedicated to the sacrifices and hardships of the women and children bereaved by war. The laurel leaf design around the top is symbolic of Victory and Honor.

On one side of the other urn, a figure represents the Lord as related in Genesis, Chapter I: "The spirit of the Lord moved on the face of the waters". The spray of laurel, on the representation of the waters, recalls to memory those who lost their lives at sea. The rainbow is the symbol of hope and peace. The reverse side of this urn shows a figure of an angel pushing away the stone—symbolic of resurrection and eternal life.

From the platform and facing west, is the reflecting pool; beyond it are the two flagstaffs, and the graves area, with the chapel set at the intersection of the main avenue, which are laid out as the arms of the Cross. To the north is the beach and the English Channel. As late as 1956 it was still possible to see remnants of the so-called "Mulberry" the artificial port created by sinking ships and concrete caissons to facilitate the landing of our men and supplies. The Mulberry was installed a few days after the first assault, but was wrecked by a storm two weeks later. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of troops, and millions of tons of equipment and supplies were landed over this and neighboring beaches. Soon it became possible to draw gasoline through pipe-lines laid across the English Channel.

On the east side of the memorial is the semi-circular Garden of the Missing. Inscribed on its walls are the name, rank, organization and State of 1,557 of our missing. These gave their lives in the service of their country but their remains have not been identified, or they were buried at sea in this region. These men came from every State in the Union as well as from the District of Columbia and Guam. At the center of the west side of the garden and below the colonnade is inscribed the extract from the dedication by General Eisenhower of the "Golden Book" now enshrined in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. The garden has beds of Polyantha roses "Joseph Guy"; European Ash trees—fraxinus excelsior—grow in the lawn areas; the beds at the foot of the walls of the missing are planted with St. Johns Wort—hypericum calycinum—and golden cypress—cupressus macrocarba lutea.

In the graves area the 9,386 headstones are set in 10 plots. Their precise alignment upon the smooth green lawn conveys an unforgettable impression of dignity and beauty. These dead, who gave their lives in our Country's service, came from every State in the Union and the District of Columbia. A few of them came from England, Scotland and Canada. Informal groups of mixed shrubs—deciduous trees and conifers—are planted in the grave plots.

The circular chapel, also built of vaurion stone on ploumanach granite steps, is surmounted by a bronze finial with an armillary sphere. In the frieze, and vertically above the door, is a replica of the Congressional Medal of Honor, our country's highest and rarest award for valor beyond the call of duty. The chapel altar is of black and gold "grand antique" marble from the Pyrenees. Above it a cross is silhouetted against the crystal window. The altar is flanked by the flags of the United States, France, Great Britain, and Canada. The mosaic ceiling, designed and executed by Leon Kroll of New York City, symbolizes America who gives her farewell blessing to her sons as they depart by sea and air to fight for her principles of freedom. Over the altar, a grateful France bestows a laurel wreath upon our dead who gave their lives to liberate Europe's oppressed peoples. The return of peace is recalled by the angel, the dove, and the homeward-bound ship.

At the western end of the main axis of the cemetery are two Italian granite (Baveno) figures by Donald De Lue representing the United States and France.

At the memorial one can descend a flight of granite steps to a parapet. From here can be seen the vertical stone cliffs approximately 1,200 yards to the right. To the left, about 2,500 yards, one can see the Pointe de la Percee. Between these two points lies Omaha Beach one of the three beaches where, in the darkness of the early morning hours on 6 June 1944, three Airborne Divisions, the British 6th, the U.S. 82nd and 101st, dropped behind the beaches to destroy enemy forces and to cover the deployment of the seaborne assault troops. Simultaneously the Allied Naval forces moved in with battleships, heavy cruisers, destroyers, and transports, and began laying down a barrage of gunfire along the cliffs and inland on enemy bivouac areas and supply depots, as well as centering their fire on all roads leading to the beaches. At 0600 hours, under cover of this naval gunfire as well as air bombardment, six U.S., British, and Canadian Divisions landed in the greatest amphibious assault recorded in history.

The tidal flats all along the beach for about 250 yards out from the high-water line were studded with obstacles made of rails or heavy angle iron and logs driven in the sand. Most of the obstacles were mined with Teller mines and set in such a manner that they would blow or stave in the bottoms of landing craft. The enemy had been, for several months, working intensively on fortifying this area. At the entrance of the draws, the enemy constructed concrete blockhouses and pill-boxes. Many of these fortifications were connected by underground tunnels. Along the brow of the cliffs were trenches with dug-in machine gun and mortar emplacements. The flat area between the high-water line and the base of the cliffs was heavily mined with anti-personnel and tank mines and protected with barbed wire entanglement. The first wave of troops had to disembark from their boats in water up to their waists, and in some instances deeper, and wade ashore through these obstacles.

The engineers in the first wave had lost a lot of their equipment due to the high seas which capsized the boats causing some of them to hit the mined obstacles established by the enemy. Continuing on, the engineers began to open gaps through the shingles piled against the sea wall with whatever equipment they were able to retain. Other engineers, aided by the Infantry, were opening gaps through the minefields and wire entanglement. This work was made extremely difficult by the enemy firing from their fortified positions along the cliffs directly down on the beach into the troops and supplies coming in from the boats. By 0800 hours the troops has worked their way up the face of the cliffs and were beginning to neutralize the enemy positions from behind. By 1400 hours the enemy fortifications along the cliffs were destroyed or reduced to a point that they were of little value. The engineers opened roads up to draws; and tanks, heavy artillery and supply trucks were moving inland to support the troops that had advanced to the highway that enters the cemetary.

The Allied air forces had been over this area before the landing started, searching out targets for the Naval Forces to fire on, and bombarding the access roads as well as any enemy troops and equipment moving toward the landing areas. The air forces dropped more than 37,000 tons of bombs during the month of May just prior to the invasion. This air preparation was successful in destroying all rail and highway bridges. The bombardment also reduced all rail centers to or about 40% of their effectiveness. This systematic bombing by Allied air forces was far reaching as it disrupted all forms of transportation between the Seine and the Loire.

Eight road miles west of here is Point du Hoc which the U.S. 2d Ranger Battalion stormed in the same manner as the old medieval castles were attacked, by grapping hooks and ladders. Thirty-three road miles to the west is Utah Beach where in the same morning, 6 June, American troops made another amphibious assault as well as an airborne landing. The principal units that made the assault landings here in Omaha Beach were the U.S. 1st and 29th Divisions.

The Allied armies grew rapidly in strength. Driving northwest, American forces, aided by strong naval and air bombardment, freed Cherbourg on 26 June. On 9 July, the British and Canadians fought their way into Caen; nine days later U.S. units took St. Lo. The Allies could now unleash their planned attack to break out of the beachhead. While British forces heavily engaged the enemy on the Allied left flank, American troops west of St. Lo undertook the major effort to drive through the enemy defenses. On 25 July, following a paralyzing bombardment by the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces and the Royal Air Force, the U.S. 4th, 9th and 30th Divisions opened a gap in the enemy line which was promptly exploited by the 1st Infantry and 2d and 3rd Armored Divisions. Other American forces progressively added their efforts, liberating Coutances on 28 July. In a week the drive had cleared Avranches.

After nearly two months confinement to the beachhead area, the Allied armies had finally broken into the open and were moving forward on a broad front.

An orientation table at the overlook indicates the various landing beaches. From the overlook one may descend to the beach where another orientation table is located showing the Mulberry in some detail. Down on the beach a visitor can get a better idea of the perils of those who stormed ashore on that June morning.

POINTE DU HOC RANGER MEMORIAL

The Pointe du Hoc Ranger Memorial, covering 30.5 acres, is the battleground 8 road miles west of Normandy American Cemetery, where Colonel Earl Rudder's 2d Ranger Battalion scaled the 100-foot cliffs on D-Day morning, 6 June 1944, to seize this fortified enemy position which controlled the landing approaches to Omaha and Utah Beaches. The site, preserved since the war by the French Committee of the Pointe du Hoc, which errected an impressive granite monument at the edge of the cliff, was transferred to American control by formal agreement between the two governments on 11 January 1979 in Paris, with Ambassador Arthur A. Hartman signing for the United States and Secretary of State for Veterans Affairs Maurice Plantier signing for France.

General Omar Bradley, who commanded the operation against Omaha and Utah Beaches, commented: "No soldier in my command has ever been wished a more difficult task than that which befell the 34 year-old commander of this Provisional Ranger Force. Lieutenant Colonel James E. Rudder, a rancher from Brady, Texas, was to take a force of 200 men, land on a shingle shelf under the face of a 100-foot cliff, and there destroy an enemy battery of coastal guns."

At approximately 4:30 a.m. on the morning of 6 June 1944 the Rangers set out for their objective. As the small flotilla of British assault landing craft, loaded down with 225 men of the U.S. 2d Ranger Battalion, approached the cliffs of Normandy, a Ranger in one of the L.C.A.s decided to "stand up and have a look". "My God, they are up there waiting for us", the young soldier said as he sat back down, readied his rifle and prepared to hit the beach. As all of the assault craft came within range, the enemy at the top of the cliff opened up with concentrated small arms and machine gun fire. The "zing" of ricocheting bullets was in the air. Fifteen Rangers were killed or wounded during the struggle through the rough surf, and the dash across the heavily cratered narrow beach. The fighting, the bleeding, and the dying on the Normandy beaches had begun. The D-Day Ranger Force of two battalions, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James Earl Rudder, a former football coach and rancher of Brady, Texas, had a special mission on the right flank (western anchor) of Omaha Beach. Three companies of the 2d Ranger Battalion were to scale to the 100-foot high cliffs in an isolated action three miles west of the main landings, and take a heavily fortified battery position at the "Pointe du Hoc". One company of the same unit would land on Omaha's "Charlie" beach and assault the enemy positions at "Pointe de la Percée". If the assault at Pointe du Hoc was successful by H-Hour plus 30 minutes, the 5th Ranger Battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Max Schneider of Shenandoah, Iowa, and the remaining companies of the 2d Battalion would land there. If not, Schneider's Rangers would land on Omaha and proceed with an overland attack on Pointe du Hoc. As the situation developed, the Rangers were to fight a battle completely different, with different objectives from the ones planned prior to D-Day.

Ranger Captain Ralph E. Goranson, of Libertyville, Illinois, with the special mission at Pointe de la Percée, led the 68 men of "Charlie" company across the sand, subjected to deadly accurate enemy fire. Only 29 of his Rangers made it. Thirty-nine were dead or about to die in the surf and on the beach. "Here's one for Ripley", Captain Goranson said to one of the Ranger officers some time later, "I found nine slugs and bullet holes in my gear and clothing—didn't get a scratch, yet so many around us have died". British destroyers eventually took care of the enemy installations at the Pointe de la Percée, but in spite of the severe losses the remaining handful of Goranson's Rangers went on to destroy a well defended enemy fortification inflicting many casualties.

The German fortifications at Pointe du Hoc contained the enemy's biggest guns, a battery of six 155 millimeter howitzers of French make. This artillery with a range of 25,000 feet posed a great threat to the troops on both the American beaches and had to be knocked out by H-Hour (6:30 a.m.) if the landing were to succeed with a minimum of losses. The late Lieutentant Colonel Rudder (who was later to become the President of Texas A&M University at College Station, Texas, and a major general) was sure he had the men to do the job. Lieutentant Colonel Rudder' men, in turn, had complete confidence in his leadership.

Eighteen U.S. Bombers dropped their bomb-loads minutes before the Rangers hit the beach, driving the enemy underground and momentarily disrupting communications. The assault itself was not unlike a medieval attack on the ramparts of a besieged castle. When D-Company platoon leader Lieutentant George F. Kirchnef, of Baltimore, Md., got his first close up look at the cliffs and heard the rattle of the enemy machine guns overhead his immediate thought was: "This whole thing is just one great big mistake, we'll never make it". But the Rangers did "make it". It was a wild and frenzied scene as the men of Dog, Easy, and Fox companies scaled the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc. They accomplished this very difficult task by means of rocket-fired rope and rope ladders anchored to the top of the cliff by grappling hooks. The U.S. destroyer *Satterlee* saw the enemy firing from positions along the edge of the cliffs and moved in for close support fire. Ropes were cut, hurling Rangers back down to the beach. They got up and found other ropes to climb. Hand grenades were dropped on their heads. They continued to climb.

Sergeant Hayward A. Robey, an E-Company BAR man, and a couple of other Rangers reached the top in less than five minutes. Robey saw a group of the enemy to his right throwing grenades over the cliff. From a shallow niche at the cliff's edge he sprayed the grenadiers with 40 or 50 rounds of fast fire. Three of the enemy dropped and the rest disappeared into shelters. Rangers in larger numbers were now scrambling over the cratered edge of the cliff, driving the enemy back in a determined effort to reach and destroy the main objectives, the 155 millimeter guns. As Ranger groups reached their appointed gun emplacements they were shocked and surprised to find empty casements, and almost all of the concrete positions completely pulverized. The big guns were strangely no place to be found.

Radio communications in these early stages of the battle were ineffective. A communications team still down on the beach made repeated attempts without success to reach the 5th Ranger Battalion.

Due to the delayed landing at Pointe du Hoc, Schneider's Rangers were already landing as pre-arranged on Omaha Beach, where a very much bigger battle was raging, and, as it turned out, a place where combat troops were badly needed. Therefore, the Rangers at the "Hoc" had to fight on alone. The 5th Rangers would take part in unexpected battles and would later be credited with "leading the way" on Omaha Beach.

While the Rangers were mopping up the Pointe, a patrol led by D-Company's First Sergeant Leonard G. Lomell, of Toms River, N.J., discovered the missing French 155's in an apple orchard cleverly camouflaged and sited for fire on either of the two beaches. Lomell and his men destroyed the guns with thermite grenades and thus prevented untold casualties on both Utah and Omaha Beaches. Lieutenant Colonel Rudder now instructed the radio team to send the following message: "Located Pointe du Hoc—mission accomplished—need ammunition and reinforcements—many casualties". About two hours later a brief message was received from Major General Clarence R. Huebner, Commander of the 1st Infantry Division, which read as follows: "Sorry, no reinforcements available, all Ranger forces have landed". Rudder's Rangers could not now expect any help from ground forces landing three to four miles away, but they did have destroyers just off shore that were ready, willing and able to lend support. Communications with the Destroyer *Satterlee* was established via means of a signal lamp by Lieutenant James Eikner, the Rangers' communications officer. When radio contact was made, radioman Lou Lisko of Natrona Heights, Pa., asked what *Satterlee*'s radio call sign would be. The radio operator on board replied: "Just call us 'Slugger' ". For the next 48 hours the Destroyer *Satterlee* was able to live up to its radio code name. The destroyer fired on every target designated by the Rangers and also some targets it discovered on its own. Despite the many enemy artillery shells exploding very close to the *Satterlee*, and the other destroyers, they did not retreat but stayed and "slugged it out" with the enemy. The Rangers could not have accomplished their mission and survived without this support.

The battle on Pointe du Hoc was fought actually by two main Ranger groups: the force that advanced beyond and cut the coastal highway (this group also found and destroyed the missing guns); and the Rangers who stayed to form a defensive perimeter near the fortified area of the Pointe itself. Both groups were to fight off, with the help of naval bombardment, a series of counter attacks and were to take part in countless skirmishes designed to drive the Rangers back into the sea. Private First Class William Cruz, a D-Company rifleman, was the only man of a group of 11 to return from an attack on an antiaircraft position located on the extreme right flank of the perimeter. F-Company's Commander Captain Otto "Big Stoop" Masny of Pewaukee, Wisconsin, was wounded in a fire fight near gun position N°6. Every man in his group of about 10 had been wounded by enemy small arms fire, including four killed. A sniper's bullet found its mark, and killed Sergeant Jack Richards of F-Company, an outstanding high-school football player from Lou Lisko's hometown. And so it went, with other groups of Rangers continuing the attack, determined to accomplish their mission and stay alive. Sergeant Elrod Petty of Cohutto, Georgia, an F-

Company BAR man, accounted for 30 of the enemy singled-handedly in one isolated action. The medical section with the Ranger assault force, under the command of Captain Walter E. Block, M.D. of Chicago, Illinois, passed a very busy day. They did a heroic job of taking care of the wounded, although they themselves were constantly under enemy fire and suffered a number of wounded among their own ranks. In spite of the many casualties suffered, and thanks to the great naval support fire, the Rangers survived the fighting on D-Day and tenaciously held fast.

D+1 found the Rangers in defensive positions fighting off more attacks and awaiting the arrival of the rescue forces from Omaha Beach. An enemy machine gun position occupied by a number of German riflemen, located at the extreme left flank of the perimeter was a particularly annoying problem ever since the H-Hour landing. The two attempts by Fox company men had resulted in casualties and failed to eliminate the machine gun nest. The Rangers were too shorthanded to take further action, so a message was sent to higher command via a destroyer radio explaining the predicament. During the late afternoon of D+1 Rangers stood up and cheered as U.S. fighter bombers attacked and obliterated the enemy gun position. "Beautiful, right on target, a bullseye", shouted Sergeant Robert G. Youso of Rockville, Md., who was wounded earlier in a three man ground attack on this position. He had crawled to within 20 yards of the enemy but was shot through the arm by a German rifleman as he half raised to throw a hand grenade into the machine gun nest. He spent the next day fighting with one arm in a sling.

Suddenly, friendly planes appeared to bomb and strafe Pointe du Hoc. Apparently, the Air Corps had been erroneously informed that the Rangers had been wiped out. The squadron leader, using good judgment, came down to tree top level for a better look at his designated target. Many of the Rangers on the bombcratered terrain stood up and frantically waved their arms, helmets and field jackets. One Ranger, under fire, spread out on the torn earth an American flag for more positive identification, "Look, he sees us . . . there he's waiving back at us", a Ranger shouted, "He knows now that there are friendly troops down here". The low flying squadron leader, satisfied that U.S. troops were still fighting for possession of this little corner of France, joined the other pilots at the higher altitude and headed back across the channel. The tiny Ranger beachhead at Pointe du Hoc was in an almost constant state of siege. It was actually after the early destructions of the big guns that most of the fighting on this little piece of French real estate took place. Right up to the time of the relief on D+2 by advancing troops from Omaha Beach the Rangers continued to fight for survival.

Having run out of ammunition for some of their own weapons many hours earlier, Rudder's men were now using captured German machine guns, and this got them into some serious trouble. When other advancing friendly forces heard the distinctive sound of the German machine guns, the opened up with tank and mortar fire on the beleagued Rangers, thinking they had run into the enemy. As the first rounds began exploding in the C.P. area, Lieutenant Colonel Rudder, above the noise of the explosions and sounds of gun fire could be heard shouting: "Stop firing those machine guns". But the friendly fire did not stop until Corporal Frank "Killer" Kolodziejczak of Natrona Heights, Pa., contacted these forces by radio. This mistake in identity tragically resulted in four Rangers killed and six wounded.

The relief of the forces on Pointe du Hoc took place a short time later. The 5th Ranger Battalion and the 116th Infantry Regiment of the 29th Division arrived about noon on D+2. Their arrival forced the enemy to retreat westward Grandcamp-les-Bains, where that evening another major battle would be fought. For the first time since H-Hour the survivors of the battle at Pointe du Hoc could breathe easy. Only 90 of the original 225 Rangers who had landed there two days earlier were now able to bear arms. Some of the 90 with comparatively lesser wounds were also listed as casualties, including Lieutenant Colonel Rudder. Although wounded twice he refused to be evacuated, remaining with his men in the continuing effort to expand the beachhead. The 2d Ranger Battalion, in the D-Day assault, landed approximately 450 men on the Normandy beaches. Seventy-seven were killed in action; 158 wounded and 38 missing—a casualty rate of around 60 per cent. The survivors of Pointe du Hoc moved out to join other troops, and to take part in still other battles that were yet to be fought before Hitler's armies could be finally and totally defeated.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of all Allied forces in the Normandy assault, once said: "I had always attached great importance to the liquidation of the Pointe du Hoc gun battery". During a nostalgic post-war visit to the same area the General said: "It took guts to get up those cliffs that day".

Today, the battle-scarred Pointe du Hoc remains exactly as the Rangers left it on the afternoon of 8 June 1944. The only addition is a large stone monument erected in memorial tribute to the men who fought and died there. The monument was a project of a grateful and dedicated group of Frenchmen known as the "Comité de la Pointe du Hoc." It was through their efforts and the generosity of the Government of France that this sacred corner of French soil was placed in perpetuity under the care of the American Battle Monuments Commission which maintains American military cemeteries and memorials on foreign soil.

This narrative is based upon the personal account of Mr. Louis Lisko, Historian of the Ranger Battalions Association.

UTAH BEACH MONUMENT

On June 6, 1944, during the early morning hours of darkness, three airborne divisions (the U.S. 82d and 191st and the British 6th) dropped to the rear of the Normandy beach area to cover deployment of seaborne assault forces. Simultaneously, Allied naval forces swept the English Channel of mines and preceded the assault vessels to the landing areas. At 6:30 a.m., under the cover of intense naval and air bombardment, six U.S., British and Canadian divisions began landing on Omaha, Utah, Gold, Juno, and Sword beaches in what was to become the greatest amphibious assault of recorded history.

The larger Allied force, which included the U.S. 1st and 29th Divisions, established the main landing area at Omaha Beach, which terminated in precipitous and steep sandy terrain, where the enemy resisted with every device and weapon at his disposal. The American Battle Monuments Commission's Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, overlooking Omaha Beach, commemorates thoroughly the operations that took place there.

The VII Corps, of which the U.S. 4th Division was a part, landed on Utah Beach to the west. It had the mission of liberating the Cotentin Peninsula. The VII Corps capture of Cherbourg on June 27 contributed greatly to the landing operations, as the port was essential to supply of Allied forces.

Utah Beach Monument is situated on Utah Beach where the U.S. 4th Infantry Division came ashore on D-Day, June 6, 1944. It is located at the termination of Highway N-13D, about 3 kilometers northeast of Ste Marie-du-Mont (Manche), France. An airborne landing behind the beach by the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions preceded the seaborne landing. This impressive monument commemorates the achievements of American forces in the U.S. VII Corps (82d and 101st Abn Divisions and the 4th, 9th, 79th and 90th Inf Divisions) during the liberation of the Cotentin Peninsula, June 6–July 1, 1944. It consists of a 24-foot rose granite obelisk on a low pedestal, with a suitable inscription and carved relief embellishments. The park-like setting of the monument contains benches and plantings. Adjacent to it is a small parking area for vehicles.

NATIONAL GUARD MONUMENT AT VIERVILLE-SUR-MER, NORMANDY

Created and built by members of the Army and Air National Guard to commemorate the heroism of the U.S. forces which landed on D-Day, 6 June 1944, to launch the liberation of France and, indeed, western Europe. The monument is maintained through the Historical Society of the Militia and National Guard. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the monument. It was dedicated on 6 June 1969 and is situated atop a battered pillbox overlooking Omaha Beach in the landing area of the 116th Infantry Regiment, the lead element of the 29th (Blue and Gray) Infantry Division on that fateful morning some 40 years ago.

JUNE 6, 1984

Worldwide press accounts captured the tributes, the memories, the drama, the solemnity, the daring and the personalities that marked the 40th anniversary observance of D-Day. The following news items are representative of those accounts . . . the vivid recollections and re-creations of a strategic period of American history:

NORMANDY: D-DAY PLUS 40 YEARS

(By Pierre Salinger, Travel & Leisure, June 1984)

On June 6, 1944, Normandy seemed so far away. It was a little more than a week before my 19th birthday, and I had just become an officer in the United States Navy. I was proud of the one gold stripe on my shoulders, and in my pocket were orders to rejoin a submarine chaser somewhere in the Pacific—for security reasons, the final destination was in code. While my mother was French and my father's parents had come from Germany, I was essentially a West Coast man—born in San Francisco, my eyes and mind focused on the Pacific Basin, on China, on Pearl Harbor, on the war with Japan. And while we were cheered by the progress on the Atlantic side of the war, we felt it wouldn't make much difference for those of us who had to fight the Japanese. It would be 15 years before D-Day would have any personal meaning for me.

The catalyst was one of my best friends, Cornelius Ryan, one of the 20th century's most gifted writers and historians, with whom I had worked at Collier's magazine for two years. When Collier's went under in 1956, we both had to find something else to do. Connie, freed from the responsibilities of a day-to-day job, decided to write the ultimate book on the Normandy invasion, which he had helped to cover as a journalist. His book, "The Longest Day," dramatized D-Day as no writing before or since has managed to do. Two years later, while I was working at the White House, I succeeded in convincing the Defense Department to provide troops to re-enact the landing for the film version of Connie's book. But strangely enough, it was early this year—some five months before the 40th anniversary—that I first visited the historic beaches myself.

In January, the Atlantic Coast was cold and windy. The blue sky was dotted with clouds. The long, powerful tide was pounding waves against the cliffs, and scores of small French fishing boats were heading back to the coastal village of Port-en-Bessin, whose inner harbor—the only natural one on this long stretch of the Normandy coast—is protected by thick, drab gray granite walls built by Vauban, the minister of defense for Louis XIV. Port-en-Bessin was strategically located on D-Day, for it lay just on the invasion's dividing line. Gold, Juno and Sword beaches, to the east, were the focal points for the British and Canadian assaults; Omaha and Utah beaches, to the west, were where the Americans fought their way ashore. Forty years later, neither the virtually barren sand dunes not the nearby pastures hide the impressive number of concrete bunkers and blockhouses the Germans built to repel the invasion. They are stark reminders of the Germans' failure. Many of these pillboxes have been turned into memorials, some with moving citations from Roosevelt, Churchill and De Gaulle.

For me, there were three points in the visit that brought the reality of 40 years ago into focus. The first was Pointe-du-Hoc, a vertical black 100-foot cliff that emerges from a violent sea. At the top of the cliff is a complex of giant German concrete blockhouses believed by the Allies to control and dominate the approaches to Omaha and Utah beaches. Nobody would dare try to climb that cliff today, and yet, at 4:30 a.m. on D-Day, Colonel James E. Rudder led the 225 men of the Second Ranger Battalion up the forbidding wall of stone, struggling their way up under ferocious German gunfire. One hundred and thirty-five of the men were killed or wounded, and the appalling thing was that when the survivors reached the top, they discovered the giant German cannons they had been sent to silence were not there. The area still looks like a battlefield. Not even a bush has grown by the torn blocks of concrete, the twisted iron rods and barbed wire that stretch above the underworld labyrinth of the German bunkers. A sign urges care in going through this area, warning of the possibility of undiscovered mines or unexploded shells. An anchor made of dark granite, facing the sea, commemorates the courage of the young Americans who climbed the cliff. Today, on the landing beaches from east to west, Pointe-du-Hoc remains the only place where time and nature have not erased the fury and violence of D-Day. Only the occasional peals from the distant church tower of Criqueville remind you that life still exists for human beings.

Just east of the sheer wall of Pointe-du-Hoc, the stone face ends, giving way to more gentle grass-covered cliffs that lead down to the long yellow-sand Omaha Beach and its three villages, Vierville-sur-Mer, St. Laurent and Colleville-sur-Mer. It is north of Colleville-sur-Mer that you find the second impressive reminder of D-Day—the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. As far as your vision permits, across this 172-acre plateau overlooking Omaha Beach, you can see the 9,836 identical Carrara marble crosses and occasional Stars of David commemorating the American men and women who fell in the Battle of Normandy—some 2,500 on D-Day. The simplicity and the beauty of the cemetery, and the care with which it is maintained, are stunning. Not a weed disturbs the perfectly manicured lawn. Only the wind and the occasional shriek of a sea gull from the nearby beach accompany the serenity and peace. On the back of each cross or Star of David is a simple inscription. The name of the victim, where and when he or she was born, where and when he or she was killed. A white sign at the entrance reads "Silence and Respect." But it is unnecessary. The dignity of the site is overwhelming, and it fills one with sadness and pride—sadness for the lives lost, for the families of the brothers or the fathers and sons buried side by side; pride that 40 years later, we still care enough about these men and women to maintain a cemetery that is unduplicated in the world.

On the grounds of the cemetery are a monument and a chapel. The monument—a sober semicircular gray stone memorial—has a garden and Tablets of the Missing in the rear. Inside the monument, you can relive the battle of the Normandy beaches and the development of the Allied thrust into France and Western Europe. On the inner face of the colonnade's lintel is this inscription: "This embattled shore, portal of liberation, is forever hallowed by the ideals, the valor and the sacrifices of our fellow countrymen." The chapel, constructed in Vaurion limestone, also has its inscription: "These endured all and gave all that justice among nations might prevail and that mankind might enjoy freedom and inherit peace." Finally, overlooking the beach, there is an orientation table from which you can look down on the shore and try to imagine the events of June 6. A small path leads from the orientation table down to the beach. It is so tranquil and beautiful that you find it hard to believe the savagery and carnage of 40 years ago.

Of course, it was not just Americans who fell on D-Day. Nearby, in Bayeux, is the largest of the British Commonwealth cemeteries—covered with tombs made of stone. It is smaller than the American cemetery but equally impressive, and the dead are not merely British and Canadians, but Australians, South Africans, Russians, Italians—and even enemy Germans.

But finally, if you want to comprehend the extraordinary dimensions of Operation Overlord, the code name given to the Allied landing in Normandy, you must go to Arromanches, in the center of the British-Canadian landing area dubbed "Gold." The operation was immense—500,000 tons of concrete were brought across the Channel from Great Britain to build 10 miles of floating roads and a series of docks to unload 9,000 tons of military matériel each day. A British officer said at the time: "If we want to land, we have to bring our own harbor with us." They did. Today, at low tide, as the sea pulls back from the coast, it reveals the remains of this ambitious project—gigantic jetties and pontoons half submerged and covered with moss—visited today occasionally by sea gulls. When the sea comes in, each year it deposits on the beaches remnants of the operation, hulks of boats, cannons, tanks.

Some of these remnants, thrown ashore for 40 years, now sit next to the Permanent Exhibition of the Landings overlooking the beach at Arromanches. Through scale models, relief maps, dioramas and films, the museum permits you to experience D-Day as if you had been there yourself. As you face one diorama, you approach the beaches and see in the background lights that indicate the landings of parachutists covering the invasion. The film retraces the planning of D-Day by Generals Eisenhower, Bradley and Montgomery; how the Allies deceived the Germans into thinking they would come ashore elsewhere; how the German commander, General Rommel, left the coastal area the day before the landing to celebrate his wife's birthday. Finally, it shows how waves and waves of men coming ashore pierced the Normandy coastline and started moving inland to defeat the German army.

There is more to the Normandy beaches than these three areas. Everything has been done on the coastline to remember the past and highlight the courage and determination that marked that historic day. But the pride and wonder you experience in going back to the beaches must be mixed with some bitterness. Four decades later, the Europe that rose up with the United States to throw off the yoke of Nazi Germany is profoundly divided, still struggling for its identity and future. The memory of the American GIs coming ashore through heavy gunfire to help bring about the liberation of Europe has been tainted by a less positive view of the United States. Those who fought alongside the Americans in those difficult days are painfully aware of that disappearing image, and they hope the 40th anniversary will do more than commemorate the past. They hope it will create some new transatlantic understanding for the future. The Committee of the French Resistance, for example is organizing an extraordinary welcome for the American veterans of D-Day, preparing to invite them into their homes and relive with them their common struggle. They are also encouraging the veterans to bring their children, so that a new generation will understand the values that dominated D-Day and will reunite a Western alliance that seems to be drifting apart.

June 6, 1944, was the beginning of the end of the World War II. For the French, D-Day was the "Invasion." The "Liberation" would come 80 days later, on August 25, 1944—when the Allied armies marched into Paris, the eternal symbol that France was free once again.

BIG RED ONE . . . AND HOW THE SOLDIERS ON THE BEACH SAW IT

(By Andy Rooney, the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 3, 1984)

OMAHA BEACH, FRANCE.—It's difficult to find American soldiers who actually came ashore here in the first minutes of D-Day, when the Germans were firing point-blank into their ranks with machine guns from the cliffs just above the beach.

I talked with five men who lived to tell their stories. They were with the First Infantry Division, the Big Red One, perhaps the best fighting force the United States ever had. These are excerpts:

Max Zera: Things that in training had apparently come through successfully, failed when it was rather important.

Al Smith: We were 1,000 yards out and I thought everything was on schedule. I thought we'd had it made. Then we got about 500 yards from where we'd touched down and it was a disaster.

Bill Washington: I wasn't worried. We started off-loading from the ship into the small landing craft about 1:30 in the morning. I could see the flashes of fire through the smoke hanging over the water and I thought it was our flame-thrower teams going after the German bunkers. Turns out it was our boats up front being hit and exploding.

We had 30 tanks that were supposed to accompany the battalion and out of the 30 tanks, six of them made it to the beach and only one of them was still operating by the end of the day.

Chuck Horner: We had two assault companies that were to hit the beach at H-Hour. We were in landing craft that were very low in the water and quite a few of them foundered due to the high seas. As we got back out of our landing craft and moved across the beach, our boat started to back up and hit one of the poles the Germans had planted out there with a teller-mine on it and the boat blew up . . . with the Navy crew on it.

Joe Dawson: The E and F companies got almost 100 percent casualties. I do believe F Company received 100 percent casualties.

Chuck Horner: The casualty ratio in a war is usually 7-to-1, seven wounded for every one killed. Here it was 1-to-1, one killed for every one wounded.

Al Smith: We had our clothing impregnated with waxy oil against gas attacks and we'd been standing in the landing craft for three hours coming on to the beach. The guys were cold and wet and miserable. We also carried about 100 pounds, including rifles, and some of the guys were seasick.

Joe Dawson: The Germans controlled the field of fire completely. Unhappily both the support fire from the Navy and from the Air Corps fell four miles inland and did absolutely no softening up of the defenses on the beach. They were intact when we landed and we caught it, especially the first waves.

I saw there was nothing I could do on the beach except die, so I got off.

Bill Washington: Joe's company landed right in front of the only gap in the cliffs behind the beach and they began to spread out and work in there. For two hours, that little gap was all we had. Equipment was coming in and they were just dumping it on the beach and getting out and being hit by direct fire and so on. The trucks, the jeeps, the ambulances, guys, everything was getting smeared.

Joe Dawson: I detected that narrow little path and there was one soldier who'd gone up there and he'd stepped on a mine. That clued us to where the damn things were.

I got near the top of the ridge and heard voices and suddenly I heard a machine gun. I looked up and there was the machine gun. They couldn't see me out of the bunker because I was right about six feet below them. I took two grenades and pulled them and just threw them into the machine gun nest and that silenced them.

Chuck Horner: That's the way it's done. We have a tendency, in order to save lives, to try to get weapons and equipment to replace men. I don't think it's possible.

Al Smith: When you were there, you kind of felt alone and isolated. You wondered where everyone else was. Toward the end of the day, I said to myself, had I done enough? Had the guys with me done enough? You know. And we decided that, no, we hadn't done enough. What more could we have done? We couldn't tell you.

You'd never know from hearing these five men talk that they were five heroes of D-Day.

AGAIN, THE 82D FILLS THE NORMANDLY SKIES

(By Steve Twomey, the Philadelphia Inquirer, June 6, 1984)

STE. MERE EGLISE, FRANCE.—As O.B. Hill watched, he would confess later, tears welled up when the cream-colored parachutes blossomed yesterday against the perfect blue sky, bearing the 82d Airborne Division to Normandy once again.

After all, it was he who had been up there beneath the silk 40 years ago today, tumbling into these same skies above this same little French village in the opening minutes of D-Day.

Now, his successors in the 82d—all young and lean, as he had been—were jumping in tribute to the extraordinary thing he and hundreds of his buddies had done for the liberation of France. He wished, he said, that he could jump with them.

"It put a lump in my throat," said Hill, now 62 and a resident of Segundo, Calif., turning to look at the sky where the parachutes had just been. "You know, each time I go to that field where I landed, I relive it. Relive the whole damn thing. It's crazy, I know, it's crazy."

He started to cry again, softly.

Of all the thousands of American, British and Canadian veterans who have returned this week for the 40th anniversary of their Normandy invasion, none come with stronger emotions than the survivors among the 15,500 American and 8,000 British airborne troops who parachuted into history that day.

Plunging at night into skies etched with antiaircraft fire, some landed in fields flooded by the Germans so they would drown, some landed miles from where they were supposed to, and many spent hours alone trying to fight their way in the dark to something, anything familiar. Of the 6,000 American casualties on D-Day, more than a third were airborne troops.

Perhaps none of the veterans returning this week have developed so strong a bond with one place as the men of the 82nd Airborne have with Ste. Mere Eglise. "We consider this," said Harry Andersen, 64, of Richmond, Wash., "an airborne town."

It was by many accounts, the first French village to be liberated, and one of D-Day's most enduring moments occurred on the old stone church in the center of town.

Dropped far off course, Cpl. John Steele landed on the church's steeply pitched roof, slid over the side and, when his parachute caught, hung suspended above German troops who filled the square below. Steele played dead for hours to avoid becoming dead.

The village has never forgotten who freed it; the liberators have never forgotten what it took.

"When I first came back a few years ago, they would run up to me on the street and hug me and say 'Merci, merci,' " said Hill who, even as he spoke, was handing out small pieces of bubblegum to very grateful village children, as if he had just landed.

The square yesterday was jammed with hundreds of veterans and many of the several hundred villagers. They came both to watch the recreation of the airborne drop and to dedicate a new organ at the church. The 82d had paid for it, just as it had paid for stained-glass windows to replace those destroyed in the fighting on D-Day.

Bands played national anthems, cameras recorded poses before the church, veterans swapped stories again. Everyone admired the replica of John Steele, hanging by a parachute exactly where he had hung that night.

As Harry Andersen stood in his white windbreaker with his airborne wings pinned to the front, a group of hesitant young Englishmen approached and held out a piece of paper and a pen.

They had come all the way from England to see the 82d yesterday, and they wanted Andersen's autograph, just because he had been "one of those who dropped out of the sky that night 40 years ago.

SOME FROM 82ND, 101ST COME HOME

(The Washington Times, June 5, 1984)

STE. MERE EGLISE, FRANCE (AP).—Elderly veterans and youthful tourists playing the part in vintage World War II uniforms besieged this small Normandy coast town yesterday as festivities markings the 40th anniversary of the D-Day landings got into full swing.

The inevitable souvenir stands also were crowding the small community of 1,500, where the most distinctive sight was the dummy figure of a U.S. soldier with his parachute draped over the tower of the church—a re-enactment of the GI's successful attempt to play dead after he failed to cut himself down.

The town's main square bustled with military vehicles of every description, old veterans and tourists alike wandered through the streets and business generally boomed as final arrangements were being made throughout Normandy for the commemoration of June 6, 1944.

Ste. Mere Eglise was the first French town liberated in the D-Day invasion.

Hanging from the church tower over the happy confusion below, the mock paratrooper represented Pvt. John Steele of the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division, who was shot in the foot and landed on the church steeple.

Unable to cut himself down, he played dead.

Ste. Mere Eglise's Airborne Museum was packed with visitors, many of them former 82nd and 101st Airborne troops returning to the scene of perhaps their most famous action.

"I haven't seen this much stuff since the war," said Robert Will of Haddon Heights, N.J., nodding at the packed square filled with olive drab U.S. military vehicles ranging from motorcycles and jeeps to 2½-ton trucks.

Mr. Will was a member of the 82nd who landed in the town about a block from the main square the night before D-day in the opening action of the invasion.

"We moved out and blocked the Germans coming from the beach to keep them from coming through the town," said Mr. Will, drinking a beer at a cafe across from the church. "We were here three days."

The town was teeming with people of all ages, wearing bits and pieces of old uniforms. Even an old German motorcycle could be seen whizzing about like an image from an old movie.

Some of the would-be soldiers were wearing complete World War II U.S. uniforms down to the boots, looking completely authentic except for their hair length—too long—and age—about 40 years too young.

Ceremonies began Sunday with a Mass and an official welcome for the veterans. At a ceremony yesterday at the Airborne Museum, Gen. James M Gavin, deputy commander of the 82nd on D-Day, received a flag offered by the French veterans of Ste. Mere Eglise. Gen. Gavin, now 77, is a local hero whose D-day foxhole is carefully preserved and marked with a signpost outside town.

Today, 150 current members of the 82nd Airborne along with 30 British paratroopers were scheduled to make a commemorative jump at a farm near here.

Buses, campers and mobile homes continued to pour in yesterday and mobile snack bars and streetside food vendors started to proliferate along the flag-festooned streets.

A few miles away at Utah Beach, the main ceremonies will be held June 6 with President Reagan. French President Francois Mitterrand, Queen Elizabeth II of Britain, Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, King Baudouin of Belgium, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, King Olav of Norway and Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg on hand.

Today, official ceremonies will start behind Gold, Sword and Juno beaches, where 83,000 British and Canadians and a small but determined French commando unit fought their way ashore or landed by parachute or glider.

D-DAY PLUS 40 YEARS—ADVENTURE, LOSS RELIVED

(By Peter Almond, the Washington Times, June 6, 1984)

STE. MERE EGLISE, NORMANDY.—Just as they were 40 years ago, British and U.S. paratroopers yesterday became the first Allied units to launch the D-Day commemoration—almost 300 men floating silently to earth in separate scenes that brought tears of remembrance to thousands of World War II veterans watching them from the ground.

As President Reagan, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, President Francois Mitterrand of France, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau of Canada, and several other European heads of state prepared to gather for today's commemoration, Normandy was a chaotic spectacle of color and imagery, or contrast and long-suppressed emotion.

Modern guided-missile destroyers off Utah Beach contrasted with the hundreds of World War II jeeps and trucks driven up and down the coast roads. Young active-duty troops and bands from several countries mixed curiously with hundreds of men in World War II uniforms. Scores of military helicopters clattered overhead, sometimes obtrusively, as '65-year-old veterans tried to let their wives know what it was all like back then in 1944.

It was almost as if yesterday's two parachute drops—and a cliff climb at Pointe du Hoc by about 60 U.S. Rangers were an interruption to a gigantic party that had been going on anyway along the 50-mile length of the beaches and deep inland, where every town and village displayed Allied flags and where there was barely a spare room to be found.

A combination of tide conditions and high winds actually made the U.S. Rangers the first to "set foot on enemy soil" in yesterday's D-Day reenactment, but that took nothing away from the airborne troops, whose landings themselves were a study in contrast.

First to jump was the 2nd Battalion of the British Parachute Regiment, 68 men representing the 6th Airborne Division which held the eastern flank of the landing near Caen. As they landed near the British cemetery near Ranville. Prince Charles, commander-in-chief of the regiment, was there to take the salute.

Sixty miles to the west of Ste Mere Eglise, the scene was much less solemn but perhaps no less memorable. Some 150 members of the 82nd Airborne Division, who had already dropped into England following a direct flight from the United States joined with 30 men of their hosts—the 1st Battalion of the British Parachute Regiment—to jump in three waves from six Starlifter aircraft.

Under a warm and breezy sky, the 82nd Airborne drifted into the nearby field of the LaLonde farm, exactly the same fields where it had landed 40 years ago. Mme Werje, daughter of the owner who is now an invalid in Florida, fingered her brooch and watched the young men land without serious incident.

In the church square of Ste Mere Eglise, thousands of heads also looked up to see what the German army might have seen that night 40 years ago. For those with little imagination, the villagers had even dressed a dummy in 82nd Airborne gear, wrapped part of a parachute around the church steeple and left the "body" to dangle there, just as the legendary Pvt. John Steele had done on the night of June 5, 1944.

In front of the church, about 30 World War II U.S. military vehicles of all kinds were lined up with their soldierly looking owners.

The vehicles, a testament to the vast amount of equipment the U.S. Army donated to the public after the war, came from France, Italy, Germany, Holland and Belgium. Some 250 old U.S. military vehicles had crossed the channel from England just the night before, making Portsmouth docks look something like they must have 40 years ago.

On the British side of the channel, too, this has been a major week for D-Day activities and even for some new surprises. Journalists and historians have been working overtime to find new angles on the D-Day story. While nothing has come out to compare with the "Ultra" secret—that the British had read all top-secret German radio transmissions throughout the war—one new D-Day hero has been found and brought to London. He is Juan Pugol Garcia, 72, a Spaniard who worked in Lisbon as a double agent, feeding the Germans false information until the British brought him to London where he told the Germans the Normandy invasion was a diversion for a bigger one at Calais. He was believed.

Thought to be dead for the last 40 years, he was found by a writer in South America, and returned to London, where last weekend he had a private audience with Prince Phillip at Buckingham Palace.

The huge amount of D-Day publicity brought a strong reaction from Moscow, where the Soviets have declared in increasingly strident tones that it was not the D-Day effort but the Red Army in the east that destroyed Hitler.

Yesterday, according to at least one report from Moscow, Soviet historians went further to claim that the war was already won by June 6, 1944, and that the West only invaded when it seemed that the Soviets would sweep the whole of Europe.

Soviet officials are not taking part in the Normandy commemoration. Neither are the Germans, but while some Allied veterans apparently do not think a German presence is appropriate, some Germans, like Alexander Uhlig, of Essen, disagreed.

Mr. Uhlig, a former patrol leader with the German 6th Parachute Regiment, had fought Allied troops in the Carentan area, a few miles south of Ste Mere Eglise.

On Monday, at the German cemetery at LaCambe, he made his own contribution to the D-Day celebrations.

"About 50 veterans from our division were there," he said as he walked between a hot dog stand and the crowd around the Damascus, Md., High School Band in the main square of Ste Mere Eglise.

"And there were about 170 men from the American 90th Division for half an hour, over the tombs of our comrades, we came together.

"I don't say this D-Day anniversary is wrong, but we Germans and Americans are allies now. We have a new enemy in the East. I wish after 40 years we could look forward together."

A MONUMENT IS UNVEILED TO FALLEN ON UTAH BEACH

(By Drew Middleton, special to the New York Times)

STE.-MARIE-DU-MONT, FRANCE, June 5.—Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh Jr. unveiled a monument today to the United States soldiers killed storming Utah Beach, which, although it lies in France, will be forever American.

The monument, Mr. Marsh said, "is not simply a tribute to the dead but to youth who did not grow old."

The monument, a small obelisk, stands near the beach across which 40 years ago Wednesday troops of the Fourth and Eighth Infantry Divisions and a special brigade of engineers swept in from the sea in the invasion's westernmost landing.

The inscription on the monument reads, "This monument erected by the United States of America in humble tribute to its sons who lost their lives in the liberation of these beaches June 6, 1944."

BLUES ON THE BEACH

The soft light of the evening sun lit the ceremony. American and French guards of honor presented arms, bands played and French fighter aircraft swept overhead. Perhaps the only break in the solemnity came during the waiting period when an American Army band broke into "The St. Louis Blues."

The French, whose role in the landing operations 40 years ago was relatively minor, appeared bent on turning the rites into a French military extravaganza. They provided a battalion of marine infantry, airborne troops, fighter aircraft in the air and destroyers and cruisers at sea. There were two French bands.

The landings at Utah Beach were the cheapest in life of the eight landings by sea and air 40 years ago. The Americans suffered about 210 casualties, compared with 1,260 for the 101st Airborne, which landed inland on the Cotentin Peninsula.

The comparative ease of the assault enabled Gen. J. Lawton Collins, known as "Lightning Joe," to push across four pastures through the marsh lands and join troops of the 101st and solidify the Allies' western flank. General Collins, still spry, was at the ceremony on the beach today.

CONTRAST WITH OMAHA BEACH

While things went wrong from the start and continued to go wrong at Omaha Beach, which is still known to veterans as "Bloody Omaha," the landings at Utah went with almost parade-ground precision.

The German defenders had been surprised by the assault and then shaken by the hail of shells from the sea and the rain of bombs from the sky.

Their resistance was sporadic and uncoordinated. Small pockets of fighting men went on when hope was gone, and as one veteran of the landing recalled, "We had to take them with grenades and mortars."

D-DAY LEGACY—EMOTIONS VARY FOR AMERICAN, GERMAN

(By Michael Dobbs, the Washington Post, June 4, 1984)

BAYEUX, FRANCE.—Howard Gillingham and Edwin Schmieger fought on different sides in the Battle for Normandy—and each has a very different view of Wednesday's celebrations for the 40th anniversary of D-Day.

For Gillingham, who served with the American victors, the ceremonies are a welcome opportunity to relive one of the great episodes in his life and bathe in public esteem for the men who liberated France. For Schmieger, who was one of the German vanquished, the same occasion provokes concern about the resurfacing of old animosities that he believes are best forgotten.

Psychologically and physically, Gillingham and Schmieger are much closer to the old wartime memories than most of the veterans who will come back next week. They are among the handful of former soldiers on both sides who, after the war was over, returned to Normandy, married French women, and raised families on the soil over which they had once fought.

The stories of how the two men settled in France, and the place that each has found in the local community, provide an insight into French attitudes after the war and the values of the German and American armies.

Apart from his midwestern American accent, there is little to distinguish Gillingham from other cafe owners in small towns throughout Normandy. A former tank mechanic with the U.S. 2nd Armored Division, he drinks and plays cards with the locals and seems to have absorbed some of the Norman character, which is typically shrewd, cautious, and initially mistrustful of outsiders.

As one of the few American veterans living in Normandy, Gillingham is frequently invited to commemorative ceremonies for soldiers killed in the Normandy campaign. On Wednesday, he will be at the American cemetery above Omaha Beach for a joint ceremony led by President Reagan and French President Francois Mitterrand.

Just a few miles away from Gillingham's village cafe, Schmieger has built a house that is as Teutonic in inspiration as could be imagined. There are Alpine scenes and a cuckoo clock on the walls, a beautifully carved wooden staircase of the kind you might expect to find in an Austrian chalet in the hallway and trees from the Tyrol in the garden.

Schmieger, who served as a paratrooper with the 3rd German Parachute Division, will not be attending any of the D-Day commemorations despite the fact that thousands of his comrades lie buried in Normandy. With a gentle smile, he recalls the fanatical belief of a generation of young Germans in Adolf Hitler as "the savior of the German nation" after its economic and military catastrophes.

"Nowadays everybody is saying that these ceremonies are not directed against Germans, but only against the Nazis. What they forget is that virtually all Germans of my age believed in Nazism at that time. The two things were inseparable." said Schmieger who was 19 in 1944.

It was only months later, when he was a prisoner of war, that he heard about the Nazi concentration camps. And, while he now vehemently condemns the German war crimes, he remembers that his first instinct was to dismiss the reports of Auschwitz and Dachau as Allied propaganda.

Howard Gillingham first met hs future wife Jeanine soon after he landed in Normandy on the third day after D-Day. He was 21, she an impressionable 17. Looking back on their courtship, conducted in the hedgerows and ditches around the U.S. Army camp, Jeanine Gillingham laughs that "American boyfriends were all the rage at the time—but mine was one of the few to come back to find me after the war."

"We liked the Americans not only because they freed us from the Germans but because they brought with them exotic things like chocolates and bananas that we hadn't seen for four years," she recalled. "The Germans had been much more military-like and stiff; they made a noise with their boots. the Americans marched like cats and chewed gum."

Edwin Schmieger met his future wife, Marie-Yvonne, while working as a compulsory laborer on a farm in Normandy. A country girl studying German to become a teacher, she used to stop to chat with the tall, blond prisoner of war when she came to the farm to collect milk.

It was difficult being German in France just after the war, with memories of the occupation still fresh and the French determined to erase the shame of collaboration. But Schmieger says he did not have much of a choice about where to live. Like fomer members of the SS, former paratroopers were not even welcome in Germany where they were blamed for continuing the war unnecessarily. His birthplace, Carlsbad, had become part of Communist-controlled Czechoslovakia.

Thanks to hard work, and his skill as a furniture maker, he was gradually accepted into a community that at first rejected him. But some of the stigma has remained.

A couple of years ago, Marie-Yvonne Schmieger lodged a formal complaint with the local school when their children was taunted with the nickname *boche*, the derogatory French equivalent of "kraut."

The D-Day ceremonies have revived some of the old controversies about the Nazi occupation in the cathedral town of Bayeux where the Schmieger family lives. A political storm blew up this week when it was discovered that the town's assistant mayor had given a "D-Day medallion" to a group of returning German veterans led by a former SS general.

The presentation of the medallion was immediately denounced as scandalous by a local Communist Party official who said, "We are all for friendship between people but not for decorating hangmen whose hands drip with the blood of innocents." The local bishop agree that the incident was unfortunate, but pleaded for tolerance, saying "Let he who has never sinned cast the first stone." The former SS officer, Heinz Harmel, said he was "astonished" by the way the whole affair had been blown up out of proportion.

It is incidents like this, refocusing public attention on the events of the past war, that the Schmiegers feared when the French government announced plans for grandiose 40th anniversary of D-Day celebrations.

"I think the whole business is a disgraceful waste of money," said Marie-Yvonne Schmieger. "It's not by behaving like this that we are going to build a new Europe."

Jeanine Gillingham disagreed.

"It's good that young people learn what happened in the last war and why Americans like my husband came here. That's the best way to ensure that such a war never happens again," she said.

OVERLORD AND AFTER

D-DAY, JUNE 6, 1944, 40 YEARS AGO TODAY

(From the Baltimore Sun, June 6, 1984)

The preparations began with the arrival of U.S. troops in Northern Ireland in January, 1942. This American effort in the European Theater had one aim: invading continental Europe from the west. The slow Allied grasp of mastery in the air and on the sea made it possible. The Americans were trying to train and equip a million men in Britain to invade France in mid-1943. In August, 1942, 6,000 mostly Canadian troops invaded Dieppe to test equipment and tactics. Most did not return.

The greater part of the German war machine was deep in Russia. The Soviet ally desperately sought relief. The Anglo-American invasion of North Africa in 1942 was a second front of sorts, leading to the 1943 campaign to knock Italy out of the war. That diversion of resources postponed the invasion of France a year. The British chief of staff designed three operations. One was Overlord, an assault on the Caen-Conentin area.

When it came, Prime Minister Winston Churchill informed the House of Commons "during the night and the early hours of this morning the first of the series of landings in force upon the European continent has taken place. . . An immense armada of upward of 4,000 ships, together with several thousand smaller craft, crossed the Channel. Massed airborne landings have been successfully effected behind the enemy lines, and landings on the beaches are proceeding at various points at the present time. . . The vast operation is undoubtedly the most complicated and difficult that has ever taken place. . . [It] was splendid to witness."

Despite the deception which for another month diverted the German army to repel phantom invaders further east, the troops who went ashore were pinned down.

By July 24, the Allies were still cooped up in a small bridgehead, but with a million fighting men. Their break-out in August sent the German armies reeling and set up the race for Berlin between the rival Allies of East and West that has shaped the destiny of Europe to this day.

Rows upon rows of Crosses sprinkled liberally with Stars of David in the American graveyards at Omaha Beach bear witness to the treasure sacrificed on June 6, 1944, and after. The truly free world for which those men died is not achieved, yet remains, thanks to their sacrifice, a possibility. War of 1944 character is no longer possible between great powers. Relentless build-up and war of attrition have come within the means of an Iran and an Iraq, and have been lost to the United States and Soviet Union in opposing one another. The mighty superpowers, locked in nuclear impasse and worried always of proliferation, can fling their conventional strength only at an Afghanistan or a Grenada.

The remains of Omaha Beach and Utah Beach are as permanently inscribed on the consciousness of mankind as the embroidery nine centuries old in a neighboring town—the Bayeaux Tapestry—portraying invasion the other way in 1066. Like one, so the other. It is not possible to imagine history had this not occurred.

REMARKS BY HEADS OF STATE

The President and Mrs. Reagan participated in three events in Normandy on June 6, 1984. There follows the remarks of the President at the U.S./French ceremonies commemorating D-Day at the U.S. Cemetery in Normandy overlooking Omaha Beach, and the dedication of Ranger Plaques at the Pointe du Hoc Memorial.

Later that day, the President and Mrs. Reagan participated in the ceremony held at Utah Beach and presided over by President Francois Mitterrand of France. Six other Allied countries were represented by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, King Olav V of Norway, King Baudouin I of Belgium, Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg, and Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau of Canada.

Following President Reagan's remarks are the speech of Queen Elizabeth of the United Kingdom, remarks by President Mitterrand of France and excerpts from the speech of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada at the Utah Beach ceremony.

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT REAGAN AT UNITED STATES-FRENCH CEREMONY COMMEMORATING D-DAY AT OMAHA BEACH

Mr. President, distinguished guests, we stand today at a place of battle, one that 40 years ago saw and felt the worst of war. Men bled and died here for a few feet of—or inches of sand as bullets and shellfire cut through their ranks. About them, General Omar Bradley later said, "Every man who set foot on Omaha Beach that day was a hero."

No speech can adequately portray their suffering, their sacrifice, their heroism. President Lincoln once reminded us that through their deeds, the dead of battle have spoken more eloquently for themselves than any of the living ever could. But we can only honor them by rededicating ourselves to the cause for which they gave a last full measure of devotion.

Today, we do rededicate ourselves to that cause. And at this place of honor, we are humbled by the realization of how much so many gave to the cause of freedom and to their fellow man.

Some who survived the battle of June 6, 1944, are here today. Others who hoped to return never did.

"Someday, Lis, I'll go back," said Private First Class Peter Robert Zanatta, of the 37th Engineer Combat Battalion, and first assault wave to hit Omaha Beach. "I'll go back and I'll see it all again. I'll see the beach, the barricades and the graves."

Those words of Private Zanatta come to us from his daughter, Lisa Zanatta Henn, in a heart-rending story about the event her father spoke of so often. "In his words, the Normandy Invasion would change his life forever," she said.

She tells some of his stories of World War II, but says of her father, "the story to end all stories was D-Day."

"He made me feel the fear of being on that boat waiting to land. I can smell the ocean and feel the seasickness. I can see the looks on his fellow soldiers' faces, the fear, the anguish, the uncertainty of what lay ahead. And when they landed, I can feel the strength and courage of the men who took those first steps through the tide to what must have surely looked like instant death."

Private Zanatta's daughter wrote to me, "I don't know how or why I can feel this emptiness, this fear, or this determination, but I do. Maybe it's the bond I had with my father. All I know is that it brings tears to my eyes to think about my father as a 20-year-old boy having to face that beach."

The anniversary of D-Day was always special for her family; and like all the families of those who went to war, she describes how she came to realize her own father's survival was a miracle.

"So many men died. I know that my father watched many of his friends be killed. I know that he must have died inside a little each time. But his explanation to me was, 'You did what you had to do and you kept on going.' "

When men like Private Zanatta and all our Allies forces stormed the beaches of Normandy 40 years ago, they came not as conquerors, but as liberators. When these troops swept across the French countryside and into the forests of Belgium and Luxembourg, they came not to take, but to return what had been wrongly seized. When our forces marched into Germany, they came not to prey on a brave and defeated people, but to nurture the seeds of democracy among those who yearned to be free again.

We salute them today. But, Mr. President, we also salute those who, like yourself, were already engaging the enemy inside your beloved country—the French Resistance. Your valiant struggle for France did so much to cripple the enemy and spur the advance of the armies of liberation. The French Forces of the Interior will forever personify courage and national spirit; they will be a timeless inspiration to all who are free, and to all who would be free.

Today, in their memory, and for all who fought here, we celebrate the triumph of democracy. We reaffirm the unity of democratic peoples who fought a war and then joined with the vanquished in a firm resolve to keep the peace.

From a terrible war we learned that unity made us invincible; now, in peace, that same unity makes us secure. We sought to bring all freedom-loving nations together in a community dedicated to the defense and preservation of our sacred values. Our alliance, forged in the crucible of war, tempered and shaped by the realities of the post-war world, has succeeded. In Europe, the threat has been contained, the peace has been kept.

Today, the living here assembled—officials, veterans, citizens—are a tribute to what was achieved here 40 years ago. This land is secure. We are free. These things are worth fighting and dying for.

Lisa Zanatta Henn began her story by quoting her father, who promised that he would return to Normandy. She ended with a promise to her father, who died 8 years ago of cancer: "I'm going there, Dad, and I'll see the beaches and the barricades and the monuments. I'll see the graves and I'll put flowers there just like you wanted to do. I'll feel all the things you made me feel through your stories and your eyes. I'll never forget what you went through, Dad, nor will I let anyone else forget. And, Dad, I'll always be proud."

Through the words of his loving daughter, who is here with us today, a D-Day veteran has shown us the meaning of this day far better than any President can. It is enough for us to say about Private Zanatta and all the men of honor and courage who fought beside him four decades ago: We will always remember. We will always be proud. We will always be prepared, so we may always be free.

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT REAGAN AT POINTE DU HOC, CRICQUEVILLE, FRANCE

We're here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty. For four long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation. Europe was enslaved and the world prayed for its rescue. Here, in Normandy, the rescue began. Here, the Allies stood and fought against tyranny in a giant undertaking unparalleled in human history.

We stand on a lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France. The air is soft; but 40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men and the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the roar of cannon. At dawn, on the morning of the 6th of June 1944, 225 Rangers jumped off the British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the Invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that some of the mightiest of these guns were here and they would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance.

The Rangers looked up and saw the enemy soldiers, the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machine guns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and began to pull themselves up. When one Ranger fell, another would take his place. When one rope was cut, a Ranger would grab another and begin his climb again. They climbed, shot back and held their footing. Soon, one by one, the Rangers pulled themselves over the top and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs, they began to seize back the Continent of Europe.

Two hundred and twenty-five came here. After two days of fighting, only 90 could still bear arms.

Behind me is a memorial that symbolizes the Ranger daggers that were thrust into the top of these cliffs. And before me are the men who put them there.

These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. (Applause.) These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent. These are the heroes who helped end a war.

Gentlemen, I look at you and I think of the words of Stephen Spender's poem. You are men who in your "lives fought for life . . . and left the vivid air signed with your honor."

I think I know what you may be thinking right now: Thinking "we were just part of a bigger effort; everyone was brave that day." Well, everyone was. Do you remember the story of Bill Millin of the 51st Highlanders? Forty years ago today, British troops were pinned down near a bridge, waiting desperately for help. Suddenly, they heard the sound of bagpipes, and some thought they were dreaming. Well, they weren't. They looked up and saw Bill Millin with his bagpipes, leading the reinforcements and ignoring the smack of the bullets into the ground around him.

Lord Lovat was with him—Lord Lovat of Scotland who calmly announced when he got to the bridge: "Sorry I'm a few minutes late," as if he'd been delayed by a traffic jam, when in truth he'd just come from the bloody fighting on Sword Beach which he and his men had just taken.

There was the impossible valor of the Poles who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the invasion took hold. And the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians who had already seen the horrors of war on this coast. They knew what awaited them there, but they would not be deterred. And once they hit Juno Beach, they never looked back.

All of these men were part of a rollcall of honor with names that spoke of a pride as bright as the colors they bore: The Royal Winnipeg Rifles, Poland's 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Screaming Eagles, the Yeomen of England's armored divisions, the forces of Free France, the Coast Guard's "Matchbox Fleet" and you, the American Rangers.

Forty summers have passed since the battle that you fought here. You were young the day you took these cliffs; some of you were hardly more than boys, with the deepest jobs of life before you. Yet, you risked everything here. Why? Why did you do it? What impelled you to put aside the instinct for self-preservation and risk your lives to take these cliffs? What inspired all the men of the armies that met here?

We look at you, and somehow we know the answer. It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love.

The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead—or on the next. It was the deep knowledge, and pray God we have not lost it, that there is a profound, moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. You were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so you and those others did not doubt your cause. And you were right not to doubt.

You all know that some things are worth dying for: one's country is worth dying for; and democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man. All of you loved liberty; all of you were willing to fight tyranny; and you knew the people of your countries were behind you.

The Americans who fought here that morning knew word of the Invasion was spreading through the darkness back home. They fought—or felt in their hearts, though they couldn't know in fact, that in Georgia they were filling the churches at 4:00 a.m., in Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying, and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

Something else helped the men of D-Day: Their rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause. And, so, the night before the invasion, when Colonel Wolverton asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer he told them: Do not bow your heads but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we're about to do. Also that night, General Matthew Ridgway on his cot, listening in the darkness for the promise God made to Joshua: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

These are the things that impelled them; these are the things that shaped the unity of the Allies.

When the war was over, there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people. There were nations to be reborn. Above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith, belief, loyalty and love of those who fell here. They rebuilt a new Europe together.

There was first a great reconciliation among those who had been enemies, all of whom had suffered so greatly. The United States did its part, creating the Marshall Plan to help rebuild for Allies and our former enemies. The Marshall Plan led to the Atlantic Alliance—a great alliance that serves to this day as our shield for freedom, for prosperity, and for peace.

In spite of our efforts and successes, not all that followed the end of the war was happy, or planned. Some liberated countries were lost. The great sadness of this loss echoes down to our own time in the streets of Warsaw, Prague, and East Berlin. Soviet troops that came to the center of this continent did not leave when peace came. They're still there, uninvited, unwanted, unyielding, almost 40 years after the war.

Because of this, Allied forces still stand on this continent. Today, as 40 years ago, our armies are here for only one purpose—to protect and defend democracy. The only territories we hold are memorials like this one and graveyards where our heroes rest.

We in America have learned bitter lessons from two world wars: It is better to be here ready to protect the peace, than to take blind shelter across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is lost. We've learned that isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with an expansionist intent.

But we try always to be prepared for peace; prepared to deter aggression; prepared to negotiate the reduction of arms; and, yes, prepared to reach out again in the spirit of reconciliation. In truth, there is no reconciliation we would welcome more than a reconciliation with the Soviet Union, so, together, we can lessen the risks of war, now and forever.

It's fitting to remember here the great losses also suffered by the Russian people during World War II: 20 million perished, a terrible price that testifies to all the world the necessity of ending war. I tell you from my heart that we, in the United States do not want war. We want to wipe from the face of the earth the terrible weapons that man now has in his hands. And I tell you, we are ready to seize that beachhead—we look for some sign from the Soviet Union that they are willing to move forward, that they share our desire and love for peace, and that they will give up the ways of conquest. There must be a changing there that will allow us to turn our hope into action.

We will pray forever that some day that changing will come. But for now, particularly today, it is good and fitting to renew our commitment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.

We are bound today by what bound us 40 years ago, the same loyalties, traditions, and beliefs. We're bound by reality. The strength of America's allies is vital to the United States, and the American security guarantee is essential to the continued freedom of Europe's democracies. We were with you then; we are with you now. Your hopes are our hopes, and your destiny is our destiny.

Here, in this place where the West held together, let us make a vow to out dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died for; let our actions say to them the words for which Matthew Ridgway listened: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor, and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Thank you very much and God bless you all.

SPEECH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AT ARROMANCHES

Mr. Mayor,, I should like to thank you and the people of Arromanches for extending to us the same welcome you gave to our forces in June 1944 when your town became a gateway to the continent.

This is the fourth ceremony in which I have taken part today to commemorate the deeds and the heroism of those who crossed the Channel from the shores of England to Normandy forty years ago and who, together with their illustrious predecessors of the Great War, have done more to establish an enduring friendship between France and Britain than any before them in our histories. I am grateful to President Mitterrand, himself a veteran of the Resistance, for having made these ceremonies possible and to all the French, Americans, Canadians, and British who have organised them and have taken part.

There are only a few occasions in history when the course of human destiny has depended on the events of a single day. June 6, 1944, was one of those critical moments. By the end of the day 156,000 British, Canadian, and American troops had landed in Normandy in the greatest amphibious operation in military history and the Allies had regained a foothold on the mainland of Europe. The triumph of that day was made possible by the closest coordination between the services in the highest traditions of the British Armed Forces. The skill of the Royal Air Force had helped to establish mastery in the skies; the fine seamanship of the Royal

Navy had enabled the troops to land and join the airborne forces already ashore; the courage and resolution of the British soldiers had broken through the coastal defences.

Those taking part were mostly young men, who had trained hard in England for this, the most vital operation of the war. None of these young men wished to die, but they knew that unless they established a bridgehead on the shores of France, there was no prospect of an end to "Hitler's War", which had already cost so many millions of lives and caused so much suffering throughout the world.

On the eve of D-Day, General Montgomery sent a personal message to the Allied Forces under his command which read: "To us is given the honour of striking a blow for freedom which will live in history; and in the better days that lie ahead men will speak with pride of our doings."

We *are* proud. Here on these sands the combat raged fiercely. In this harbour created by British engineering genius, which has survived the years to remind us of the scale of the undertaking, ships disgorged their cargoes of men and equipment. In the weeks that followed some 2 million Allied soldiers were landed and by the end of August the Battle of Normandy was won and the way was open for the liberation of France.

But battles are not won without casualties. Together with our partners in this vast and courageous enterprise, we have today paid homage to the thousands of Allied soldiers, sailors, and airmen who gave their lives on the beaches and in the fields and villages of our ancient conqueror, William, Duke of Normandy.

We honour the memory of those men and women—of the Allies, the Free French and the Resistance—who died to restore freedom to France and to the world, knowing that their cause was just and that their sacrifice would not be in vain. Their fight for freedom laid the foundations for reconciliation with those against whom they fought. And we can now *all* stand together in defence of the democratic values and ideals for which those who died, and all of you here today, fought so bravely.

In most moving ceremonies this afternoon at Bayeux and Beny-sur-Mer we were reminded in particular of the heavy price paid by the British and Candian forces. We cannot and will not forget those who are no longer with us. May they rest in peace.

We celebrate this evening the spirit which lives on—a spirit of vitality, of courage, of willingness to face the challenges of the future, while remembering the lessons of the past. However painful those lessons, they taught us of the need to live in harmony with our neighbors, the need to work together to build a strong and united Europe where future generations can live in peace and liberty.

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT FRANCOIS MITTERRAND AT UTAH BEACH, NORMANDY

Exactly 40 years ago, here on the beaches of Normandy stretching from the dunes of Vareville to the port of Ouistreham, 136,000 men came out of the troubled skies and seas in the dawn of an uncertain spring day. Theirs was a single mission—to vanquish or die. These men shaped the outcome of the war for Europe and for the world. They were Americans, British, Canadians; Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians and French; Greeks, Danes and still others, from the ten countries voluntarily joining the Allied armies. That same day 3,500 lost their lives.

Starting with a bridgehead which was won foot by foot against a formidable enemy in raging battle, victory, in the weeks that followed, demanded reinforcements of a million men, took the lives of 30,000 of them, and forced 200,000 wounded out of combat.

This landing, the largest ever, was an awesome instrument of war. Brought together in the first few hours were more than 2,000 air transports, 900 gliders, thousands of combat aircraft and 5,000 ships which posed the additional challenge of being unable to move in to the shore at high tide. We know how the battle we are commemorating today was won—by dint of detailed preparation, rigorous execution, by the combination of surprise and boldness, at the price of such losses, under the command of officers—Eisenhower, Montgomery, and so many others whose names have gone down in history.

Let us pay tribute to those who lived this battle, to these veterans and especially those among us who have remained faithful to the memory and hope of their youth. We owe to them what we are, and I sometimes wonder whether we in turn have done all we could for them. But let them not forget that in 1944 underground fighters everywhere surfaced to join them. Let us pay tribute to the Resistance, that of my country and our friends, just as I also hail the free men of Germany and Italy who never bowed their heads.

Freedom was paid for with pain and bloodshed. June 6, D-Day, remains unparalleled. Without it, nothing anywhere else would have been completed.

But our Europe had seen a thousand days and nights of waiting, struggle, failure and new beginnings which also made triumph possible. "In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over oppressed peoples of Europe," proclaimed Dwight Eisenhower in the order of the day to the Expeditionary Forces on the eve of June 5.

Yes, let us hail again the heroism of the Russian people whose armies, regaining the offensive on June 10, relieved Leningrad and broke through the German lines to the Black Sea, thereby pinning down in the East millions of brave men. Let us salute the soldiers of Italy, Africa, and the Pacific. Let us salute the Czech, Polish, and Luxembourg units which joined up with the Normandy forces while a new front was being opened in Provence. By degrees, the landing on the sixth of June sounded everywhere the hour when history tipped toward the camp of freedom.

Should I at this moment remain silent on the thought that holds my attention? The enemy at that time was not Germany but the power, the system, the ideology which had taken hold of it. Let us salute the German dead who fell in this combat. Their sons testify, as do ours that a new era is beginning. The adversaries of yesterday are reconciled and together are building the Europe of freedom. May they venture now to move and may the wisdom of the leaders of West and East be such that the Allies of yesterday are able in their turn to overcome the contradictions of a common victory from which the world expected peace finally.

Your Majesties, Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, veterans of World War II. In conclusion, I should like to express France's gratitude to you. From the proud refusal of London, capital of the free world in 1940, to the victory of May 1945, your peoples, your soldiers, in a fraternal gesture, accompanied ours, the Free French Force, the French Force de l'Intérieure, in the fight for liberation. Your presence on our soil for this anniversary is a great honor for us, a guarantee of your commitment to the past and confidence in the future.

EXCERPTS FROM THE REMARKS OF RIGHT HONORABLE PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU, PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA AT BENY-SUR-MER, FRANCE

Liberty, like peace and civilization, is indivisible. Canadians were the first from North America to join those who, a little over forty years ago, were defending these values in Europe. They knew that their destiny was intimately tied to that of the European Allies. They came from all the Canadian provinces to preserve not only the freedom of others, but also their own.

The underlying motive for war is peace. But it often takes some time to perceive this paradox, because it manifests itself several years after the cannons have been silenced, when the new generation tends to forget the sacrifice made by the older one. Hence the importance of this day of commemoration. Those who fought for peace in Europe forty years ago were our brothers. We must maintain this peace out of respect for their commitment. The world situation certainly gives us cause for concern, but we have no choice; in the face of the terrifying capacity for destruction of today's weapons, we must find a lasting peace.

JUNE 6, 1944

Considering its magnitude and the effect it would have on the history of the world, it was unrealistic to think that such an effort could remain the best-kept secret ever. Still, except for that feeling of something about to happen, only the privileged participated in the knowledge of the coming massive invasion.

Then, on the morning of June 6, the world's leaders gave the official word—Allied Forces had landed on the coast of France and were in the midst of a battle that would become the turning point of World War II.

PRAYER OF PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT DELIVERED OVER RADIO, JUNE 6, 1944

THE PRESIDENT'S D-DAY PRAYER ON THE INVASION OF NORMANDY, JUNE 6, 1944

My fellow Americans, last night, when I spoke with you about the fall of Rome, I knew at that moment that troops of the United States and our Allies were crossing the Channel in another and greater operation. It has come to pass with success thus far.

And so, in this poignant hour, I ask you to join with me in prayer:

Almightly God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.

Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.

They will need Thy blessings. Their road will be long and hard. For the enemy is strong. He may hurl back our forces. Success may not come with rushing speed, but we shall return again and again; and we know that by Thy grace, and by the righteousness of our cause, our sons will triumph.

They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest—until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame Men's souls will be shaken with the violences of war.

For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and good will among all Thy people. They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home.

Some will never return. Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy kingdom.

And for us at home—fathers, mothers, children, wives, sisters, and brothers of brave men overseas—whose thoughts and prayers are ever with them—help us, Almighty God, to rededicate ourselves in renewed faith in Thee in this hour of great sacrifice.

Many people have urged that I call the Nation into a single day of special prayer. But because the road is long and the desire is great, I ask that our people devote themselves in a continuance of prayer. As we rise to each new day, and again when each day is spent, let words of prayer be on our lips, invoking Thy help to our efforts.

Give us strength, too—strength in our daily tasks, to redouble the contributions we make in the physical and the material support of our armed forces.

And let our hearts be stout, to wait out the long travail, to bear sorrows that may come, to impart our courage unto our sons wheresoever they may be.

And, O Lord, give us Faith. Give us Faith in Thee; Faith in or sons; Faith in each other; Faith in our united crusade. Let not the keenness of our spirit ever be dulled. Let not the impact of temporary events, of temporal matters of but fleeting moment—let not these deter us in our unconquerable purpose.

With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogancies. Lead us to the saving of our country, and with our sister Nations into a world unity that will spell a sure peace—a peace invulnerable to the schemings of unworthy men. And a peace that will let all of men live in freedom, reaping the just rewards of their honest toil.

They will be done, Almighty God.

Amen.

EXCERPTS FROM STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, PRIME MINISTER OF ENGLAND, JUNE 6, 1944.

* * * * * * *

I have also to announce to the House that during the night and the early hours of this morning the first of the series of landings in force upon the European Continent has taken place. In this case the liberating assault fell upon the coast of France. An immense armada of upwards of 4,000 ships, together with several thousand smaller craft, crossed the channel. Massed airborne landings have been successfully effected behind the enemy lines, and landings on the beaches are proceedings at various points at the present times. The fire of the shore batteries has been largely quelled. The obstacles that were constructed in the sea have not proved so difficult as was apprehended. The Anglo-American Allies are sustained by about 11,000 first-line aircraft, which can be drawn upon as may be needed for the purposes of the battle. I cannot, of course, commit myself to any particular details. Reports are coming in in rapid succession. So far the commanders who are engaged report that everything is proceeding according to plan. And what a plan! This vast operation is undoubtedly the most complicated and difficult that has ever taken plalce. It involves tides, wind, waves, visibility, both from the air and the sea standpoint, and the combined employment of land, air, and sea forces in the highest degree of intimacy and in contact with conditions which could not and cannot be fully foreseen.

There are already hopes that actual tactical surprise has been attained, and we hope to furnish the enemy with a succession of surprises during the course of the fighting. The battle that has now begun will grow constantly in scale and in intensity for many weeks to come, and I shall not attempt to speculate upon its course. This I may say, however. Complete unity prevails throughout the Allied armies. There is a brotherhood in arms between us and our friends of the United States. There is complete confidence in the Supreme Commander, General Eisenhover, and his lieutenants, and also in the commander of the expeditionary force, General Montgomery. The ardor and spirit of the troops, as I saw myself, embarking in these last few days, was splendid to witness. Nothing that equipment, science, or forethought could do has been neglected, and the whole process of opening this great new front will be pursued with the utmost resolution both by the commanders and by the United States and British Governments who they serve.

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE W. L. MACKENZIE KING, PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA, JUNE 6, 1944

At 3:30 this morning the Government received official word that the invasion of Western Europe had begun. Word was also received that Canadian troops were among the Allied forces who landed this morning on the northern coast of France. Canada will be proud to learn that our troops are being supported by units of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The great landing in Western Europe is the opening up of what we hope and believe will be the decisive phase of the war against Germany. The fighting is certain to be heavy, bitter, and costly. We must not expect early results. We should be prepared for local reverses as well as successes. No one can say how long this phase of the war may last, but we have every reason for confidence in the final outcome.

I cannot better express to the people of Canada the Government's feelings at this moment than by giving to you the words of General Crerar, the Canadian Army commander, as conveyed to the Canadian assault forces on the eve of their embarkation:

"I have," said General Crerar, "complete confidence in our ability to meet the tests which lie ahead. We are excellently trained and equipped. The quality of both the senior and junior leadership is of the highest. As Canadians, we inherit military characteristics which were feared by the enemy in the last great war. They will be still more feared before this war terminates."

I should like to add this word: Let the hearts of all in Canada today be filed with silent prayer for the success of our own and Allied forces and for the early liberation of the peoples of Europe.

GEN. DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER—ORDER OF THE DAY, JUNE 6, 1944

Soldiers, sailors, and airman of the Allied Expeditionary Forces: You are about to embark upon the great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave allies and brothers-in-arms on other fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped, and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our home fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to victory!

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory!

Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

D-DAY CHRONOLOGY—1944

SUNDAY 4 JUNE

0400—General Eisenhower postpones invasion because of bad weather.

2300—Pocket submarine X23 and X20 take up positions on flanks of assault beaches.

MONDAY 5 JUNE

0415—General Eisenhower confirms D-Day will be 6 June.

Early afternoon—Mine-sweepers clear 10 channels in English Channel leading to assault beaches.

Evening—Invasion Armada of 5000 vessels departs ports in Southern England.

2115—15th Army Intelligence intercepts BBC broadcast of the "Verlaine" poem (Wound my heart with a monotonous lanquor) telling the French Resistance that the landings are imminent. OB West and Army Group B alerted. 7th Army covering actual invasion beaches was not alerted by Army Group B.

2330—Preliminary air raids on Normandy coast begin.

In the Night—French Resistance dynamites railways and severs telephone cables.

TUESDAY 6 JUNE

0015—Pathfinders jump into Normandy to mark Drop Zones for Airborne Divisions.

0020—6 gliders land British "paras" who seize bridges vicinity of Benouville across the Orne River (Pegasus Bridge).

0050—3d and 5th Parachute Regiments of 6th British Airborne Division "Red Devils" jump over right bank of Orne River.

1400—Combat Engineers at OMAHA enlarge exits from beach for passage of tanks and other vehicles.

1600—Field Marshal Rommel returns to Army Group B from his trip to Germany. 21st Panzer Division attacks British flank.

1900—US at OMAHA Beach capture coast road.

Night Fall—21st Panzer Div reaches coast between SWORD and JUNO Beaches but retreats for lack of petrol.

2000—British patrols enter Bayeaux.
2100—British capture Arromanches.
In the Night—Massive allied air-raid on Caen.

WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE

1230—First block-ships sunk to form artificial port at Arromanches.
1400—1st and 29th US Divs reach Bayeux—Carentan road.
1500—Germans continue counterattack vicinity Caen with 21st, 12th and Lehr Panzer Divisions.

THURSDAY 8 JUNE

Before Dawn—Commandos capture Port-en-Bessin. Contact made between British (50th Div) and V US Corps (1st Div). Allies hold 56 km of the coast.
During night—Bombing of Caen continues.

FRIDAY 9 JUNE

Massive exodus of refugees from Caen. 29th US Div beyond Isigny and captures bridge over Vire River.

SATURDAY 10 JUNE

Liberation of Isigny of elements of VII US Corps (101 st Abn) and V Us Corps (29 Inf)

SUNDAY 11 JUNE

Violent fighting around Carentan.

MONDAY 12 JUNE

Liberation of Carentan by 101st Abn Div and 29th Div.
1215—Churchill lands on beach at Courseulles.
In the Night—Massive air-raids on Caen.

TUESDAY 13 JUNE

British forces enter Troarn east of Caen.

WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE

Germans attack Carentan but are repulsed.
General de Gaulle lands at Courseulles and goes to Bayeux to officially liberate the city.

THURSDAY 15 JUNE

Germans attack US and British positions but are repulsed.
0110—LXXXIV Corps (Gen Marcks) at St. Lo alerted by CG of 716 Div that British paratroopers were coming down between Orne and Dives Rivers.
0130—101st Abn Div (2 regiments) drops and is badly scattered. Gen Marcks alerts 7th Army at Le Mans that invasion has started. Army Group B does not believe it because discovery of "dummy" parachutists confuses Germans as to Allies true intent.
0230-0430—82d Abn Div drops (2 regiments). 505th Regt makes an orderly drop and captures St Mere-Eglise.
0445—Merville Battery on right bank of Orne is captured by Lt. Col Otway and 150 men. (50% casualties received)
0550—US occupies Isle St Marcouf off UTAH Beach.
0600-0630—At sunrise 1365 heavy bombers attack German defenses between Vire and Orne Rivers.
0630—First troops land on UTAH and OMAHA Beaches. 116th RCT (29th Div) and 16th RCT (1st Div) assault OMAHA Beach. 8th Inf Regt (4th Div) assaults UTAH Beach.
0710—Rangers attack Pointe du Hoc.
0730—Anglo-Canadian assault forces land at JUNO, GOLD, and SWORD Beaches.

1000—Crisis at OMAHA Beach. Troops pinned down US creates two branches in beach defenses at OMAHA Beach.

1300—Crisis passes at OMAHA Beach. US Naval gunfire saves the day as German 352d Div runs of artillery ammunition.

1330—Commando #4 (Commandant Kieffer) links up with "paras" at Pegasus Bridge.

The D-Day weather forecast had decisive consequences on the success of the Allied invasion. On May 19, 1984, meteorologists, who are members of the Northern California Chapter of the American Meteorological Society, who participated in the forecasting of the weather conditions on D-Day, met in Monterey, California at a special meeting to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the World War II invasion of Europe. There follows the weather forecasts that were made from June 2 to June 6, 1944, as written by Robert C. Bundgaard, a member of Widewing, the American Weather Center which was co-located at SHAEF and the Supreme Commander.

FORECASTS LEADING TO THE POSTPONEMENT OF D-DAY JUNE 2, 3, 4, 1944

(By Robert C. Bundgaard)

On the battlefield, many military strategists often place much emphasis in getting the best weather conditions, rather than just the good, and little interest for the barely useable. But, for Overlord, the meteorological problem was not to choose an ideal weather situation, but to examine certain days known beforehand, as to the weather, wind and sea conditions that would meet the minimum demands, together with the combination of tide and dawn twilight.

The main military requirements for Overlord are, of course, now well known—favorable combination of tide and pre-dawn twilight, for landing at the very lowest tide before daybreak. Whereas in June, the duration of civil twilight varied little from day to day, the time of low tide advanced 50 minutes a day. The landing forces must have just the right amount of morning twilight, not too much, not too little. Landing operations would not be effective during the first ten minutes of the beginning of dawn civil-twilight. And, it would take an estimated thirty minutes of dusk for the first landing barges to get through the underwater defenses undetected. For 4 June, the duration of useable twilight was only fifteen minutes—not long enough. June 5th with 50 minutes was the most ideal; 6 June, about the same. But, 7 June had about two hours of pre-dawn dusk after the lowest tide; and that was much too much. The next possibility was fourteen days later.

As it turned out, the invasion was carried out under a weather situation which was on the edge of being minimal, in a period of short improvement within a longer period of storms in which the final crossing of the channel was postponed from the 5th to the 6th because of bad weather, high seas and large surf and breakers.—This is a personal account of the American forecast effort leading to the postponement of D-Day.

First, a few words about the organization for Overlord forecasting. The Overlord weather organization was established in November 1943, at which time UK's Dr. James Martin Stagg, as a civilian, became the Chief Meteorological Officer to Gen. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF). Stagg was later assigned Col. Donald N. Yates, an American, as his deputy and RAF's Sqn. Ldr. G. D. Robinson as their assistant. Not a forecaster, Dr. Stagg's field of work was always in earth magnetism and, to a lesser extent, in solar radiation—subject areas in the periphery of practical meteorology. Just seven weeks before D-day, Stagg was mobilized by the RAF to the rank of Group Captain.

For Overlord, the three participating forecast centers have been referred to as UK's Admiralty, in London, the Air Ministry's Meteorological Center at Dunstable, well to the north of London; and US's Widewing in Bushy Part at Teddington, which is south of London. The Admiralty was led by RN's Capt. L. G. Garbett, a brother to the Bishop of York, with meteorologists Inst. Cmdr. Wolfe, RN, and Inst. Lt. Hogben, RNZN, providing the main weather briefing support. At Dunstable, which had no single weather leader, the Chief of the Surface Section, designated M.O.2(a), was a civilian Mr. C. K. M. Douglas, a Charlie Mitchell type of an intuitive forecaster, with twenty-five years experience, having been involved in aircraft weather reconnaissance in WWI. The head of its Upper Air Section, M.O.2(c), was a Norwegian civilian Prof. Sverre Petterssen. Although Petterssen had been commissioned a Lt. Col. in the Norwegian Air Force, he wore his uniform only when he traveled military. With independent responsibilities, Douglas and Petterssen made separate forecasts. In M.O.2(c), Petterssen also prepared 5-day mean maps of sea-level pressure daily as part of his assigned effort for making long-range forecasts. Douglas had simply refused to make anything but short-range forecasts 12- to 24-hrs ahead.

The third forecast center, Widewing, the American weather center, was co-located with SHAEF and the Supreme Commander. It was no accidental location. From the Pentagon's Directorate of Weather, the nucleus of Widewing was made up of a contingent that Col. Don Yates was asked to take to Gen. Carl Spaatz's Headquarters for the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe (USSTAF). SHAEF was later located with USSTAF at Bushy Park.

Widewing, which Yates commanded, was an involved organization. In addition to the surface and upper-air sections, which respectively were headed up by Maj. R. G. Bounds and myself, there were four small Long Range Forecast Units, denoted LRFA to LRFD. Earlier at the Pentagon, Maj. Joseph J. George had adapted his Eastern Airline North American analogue system to the northern hemisphere for making long-range forecasts. The practice of this system was carried out at Widewing by the LRFA headed up there by Capt. Rodney Jones. The LRFB, headed by Capt. William H. Wyatt, applied California Institute of Technology's 5-day Weather Type System, previously developed there by Lt. Col. Irving P. Krick. The LRFC was a hodgepodge of symmetry points, Bauer, and periodicities carried out by Capt. Donald T. Perkins and Lt. Morrison H. Beach. And LRFD was a statistical method for supplementing the synoptic extrapolation of upper-air forecasting 3 to 6 days ahead. The LRFD was an integral part of the Upper Air Section. There was also a climatology section. Lt. Cols. Benjamin P. Holzman and Irv Krick, who provided technical direction to all there sections and units, shared briefing responsibilities under Yates. Yet, in spite of its complex organization, Widewing always sought to come up with a single, unified forecast, through a disciplined process that had been routinely practiced earlier back at the Pentagon under Joe George. In his book, Stagg compared Widewing favorably with Dunstable from which internal forecast disagreements would sometimes surface in the telephone conferences.

Actually, many felt that there should have been an Overlord Joint Forecast Center, a co-located group working together at SHAEF, a unified group not interested in nationality, but one with personal contact among its participating Allied meteorologists. Instead, Overlord would employ the normal and existing weather services of the Allied participants at their separated forecast centers. Yates felt that the type of organization which had been planned to do the job ". . . . was unwieldy as well as impractical from the outset. I understood at the time that the logical establishment of a forecast team at Supreme Hq. with joint membership was vetoed by the British. Ostensibly this would have provided too much Widewing influence." (A letter from Lt. Gen. Yates, Retd., dated May 8, 1979, to the author.)

In the months before June 5th, the weather work at Widewing was to be carried out at just the same pace and attention as during February, so that none else in the Upper-Air Section—some 40 meteorologists and technicians—were to suspect that the invasion was impending and to detect or identify its date ahead of time.

In February, "scrambled" telephone conferences were quietly instituted between the three central forecasting centers, with Stagg acting as a spokesman among the centers' briefing meteorologists. Early in the Spring, the conferences were held two or three times a week on five-day forecasting. For Overlord forecasting 4 to 6 days ahead was a SHAEF requirement which Stagg had accepted; for, as he says in his book (p. 39), he never told any of SHAEF's Cs-in-C that it could not be done, even in forecasting the individual Channel weather constituents. From mid-April onward, the conferences were held twice daily. During much of May, they were held three times daily. And on the days immediately preceding D-day, a further conference was held at three a.m. each morning for a briefing to Eisenhower at 4:15 a.m. Group Capt. Stagg spent hours each day in Widewing, poring over its maps, a convenience for him since he had none of his own and since he was there because he was General Eisenhower's personal staff weather officer for Overlord.

The Overlord telephone conferences were not at all similar to those that had worked so well for Widewing in providing advice to the Eighth Air Force and its strategic bomb wings and squadrons throughout England. Each had its own forecast unit, and there was a fully equipped and well staffed forecast center at High Wycombe, where Hq. 8th AF was located. Their telephone conferences with Widewing were entirely consultative and were chaired by the Staff Weather Officer in charge at Pine Tree. He alone was responsible for the advice, based on his own forecast work as well as that from Widewing. The purpose of the phone conference was to achieve general coordination. The phone conferences worked so well because the area of interest was a rather narrow one: take-off visibility, enroute winds and icing, cloud cover at target, ballistic winds and densities with altimeter settings for the Norden sights, and for fog or no fog on return to base. And importantly, the forecast period was only for 18-hours ahead. Secondly, all participants were American and broadly in the same age group. They had a fairly uniform background, training and experience, and they all knew one another personally. All shared the same responsibility and were eager to receive and give help.

By D-day there was a very considerable amount of upper-air weather information available (Fig. 1). The coverage was not as bad as thought. In the British Isles, aerological observations were made four times daily, at 00-, 06-, 12- and 18Z; here in North America, twice daily, at 04- and 16Z. And, there was an extensive RAF aircraft weather reconnaissance over the oceans. Some of the main tracks are shown in Fig. 1: Low flying Halifaxes, mid-level Lancasters and high-flying Mosquitoes. The Luftwaffe weather reconnaissance was equally outstanding. The weather reconnaissance flew at 950-, 750-, 500- and occasionally at 300mb. They also made "Thumbs" or spiraling ascents and descents for taking aerological soundings.

About 300 nautical miles west of Ireland and Scotland, two stationary German subs surfaced regularly to make synoptic observations. West of the British Isles, there were also two allied surface weather ships that made upper-air balloon soundings. The Germans manned and operated a special weather observation station in Ireland.

In many respects, as far as weather was concerned, WWII warfare support was rather agonistic, being carried out and fought according to special game rules. This was especially true in the weather fieid, because of the past international character of meteorology. For example, almost daily, the Luftwaffe weather reconaissance out of Brest and the RAF Lancasters out of St. Mawgen, in Lands End, would meet over the water and rendezvous in the Biscay area, saluting one another with wing dips. And those allied planes maintaining surveillance over the two German weather subs were carefully instructed, I was told, not to bomb them. Due to an error, however, one did. And, the next day or so thereafter, in retaliation, one of the allied weather ships was torpedoed and sunk by the Germans.

Not so synoptically available nor as reliable as the British observations, aerological observations were also received from the Soviet area. Out of Uxbridge, in England, Col. Thomas S. Moorman, Commander of the 21st Weather Squadron and Staff Weather Officer to the Commanding General of the 9th Air Force, operated a 40th Mobile (Weather) Communications Squadron detachment at Poltava, near Kharkarv in the Ukrane, that acted as a weather relay center for Russian weather data. The 8th AF would occasionally stage in and out of an airfield at Poltava on its bombing runs into Poland. Finally, there were also the valuable, but delayed aircraft observations from the American Air Transport Command's Ferry Routes across the North Atlantic. And there were the British sferic observations from England over the Atlantic.

The US Army Air Force had a Directorate of Weather in the Pentagon, Room 4D260, and operated a weather center there. The center, which had already converted to constant-pressure upper-air analysis, provided Widewing with coded upper-air analyses on a current basis twice daily for the area of North America and the Western Atlantic. At Dunstable, however, the upper-air analysis extended westward from the British Isles into the Atlantic only to about 50 degrees West Longitude; this presumably handicapped the British interest and effort in extended forecasting. The American areal extension of the upper-air analysis as far west as to the Pacific was very important to Widewing in its long-range forecasting efforts with the planetary waves in the upper westerlies.

As a matter of fact, one of the functions of the upper-air section at Widewing was to prepare, collect and transmit the European and Soviet upper-air observations to the Pentagon. And, believe it or not, throughout the War, all European radiosonde stations transmitted just their observed raw data. Thus, one of the main housekeeping jobs of the Widewing upperair section was to work up the soundings, getting both constant-pressure heights as well as the constant-level pressure data (for Jerry Namias) for all map levels. Many European radiosondes in WWII then did not have a sensor for making humidity observations; so, that limitation created added considerations in estimating the virtual temperature and getting compatible heights throughout the area of analysis.

Even so, one of the most prominent efforts in the Widewing upper-air section was that of estimating constant-pressure may heights from surface weather observations, especially from ships, in areas of sparce aerological data, using the methods of indirect aerology. Indirect aerology was sometimes the only source of upper-air information over the continent.

Needless to say, because of the practice of indirect aerology as well as the need to woril up by hand the radiosonde data in the upper-air section at Widewing—as well as the other problems associated with delayed wartime communications and coding and breaking of codes, the whole process of upper-air analysis and forecasting was much slower and more delayed than it is now. And that delay increased the need then for pushing the forecasting further into the future and for lengthening the forecast period to 72-hours ahead. And, of course, military planning of missions, which was the main support responsibility of the upper-air section at Widewing, itself also demanded more than the customary short-range period forecasts.

It turned out that one of the main functions of the Widewing upper-air section was to make extended upper-air forecasts, including the surface maps and attending weather. These extended upper-air forecasts were for 72 hours ahead (twice daily and, experimentally, for 174 hours into the future). The method of extended upper-air forecasting was by statistical and synoptic extrapolation.

For the background of the method, one goes back to a year or two earlier and to the Pentagon. I'd been assigned at that time to the US Weather Bureau, there to work at 24th and M Streets, Northwest, in Washington, D.C., along with Cecil Gentry and Gordon Dunn, under that grand old man, the Dean of Meteorology, Charles Mitchell, to learn how he made his five-day forecasts. Mitchell's shop was adjacent to Namias' long-range section as well as Bob Elliott's USN long-range weather-type section. And, there, I tried to absorb all I could from all three groups.

At the same time, there was also an aggressive interest made in applying statistical extrapolation to weather forecasting, following the works of Wold in Sweden, Kolmogorov in Russia and Norbert Weiner in the US, with the aim to derive long-term empirical relationships between upper-air structures and developments at sea-level. Set up by Maj. Kenneth Spengler, a group from MIT tried to help translate Mitchell's methods, especially into regression equations for predicting the residual 500mb heights. These persons were MIT's George Wadsworth and his assistant Joe O'Brian, who were working under Norbert Weiner. Another in the background of the effort was Lt. Kenneth Arrow, now here at Stanford University.

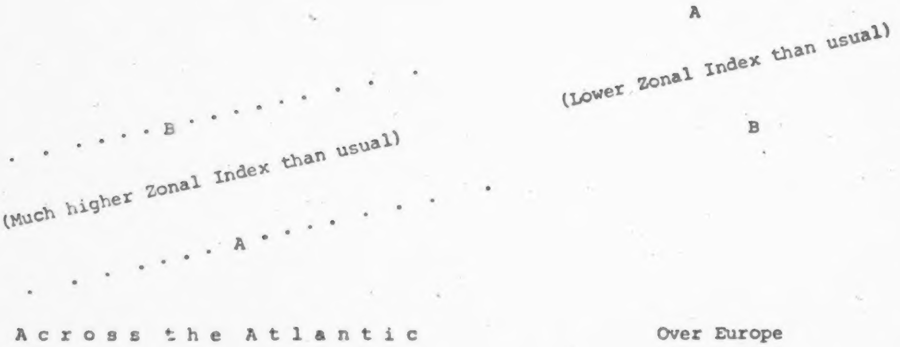
The Widewing Upper-air Section had about forty people practicing the LRFD method on a twice daily basis, making a basic 72-hour forecast, but attempting also to occasionally crank out a six-day forecast. It was based on a combination of statistical and synoptic extrapolation. At Widewing, the 500mb progs were cranked out using desk calculators. The process is described in a 317-page AWS Technical Report (R. C. Bundgaard, Series 105, No. 30, published in 1944).

In some respects, May 28th became a turning point in our work at Widewing. The Supreme Commander, with Stagg and Yates, and key members of his staff moved to Ramsey's Mess at Portsmouth, leaving Irv Krick and Ben Holzman at Bushy Park, along with G. D. Robinson, from the Meteorological Office of the Air Ministry, to participate in the telephone conferences. The next day, however, both Stagg and Yates did return briefly to Bushy Park for a three-day stay there.

From the point of view of large-scale features of the upper westerlies, the synoptic situation leading up to D-day may be summarized as follows. Fig. 2 is a 500mb "DN," or height departure from normal chart for 4 June at 00Z, shown here at 200-foot intervals. Height lines below normal are continuous; above normal, dashed; and normal, heavied. The "B's" mark the below normal centers; the "A's," for the above normal centers. The normal used was valid for the period 1-10 June. Figs 2-5 are representative of some of the upper-air maps that were made at Widewing.

In this account the 4 June map, Fig. 2, is chosen, for it represents the same unchanging configuration that had existed for the week leading up to this map time. Although the DN pattern had looked pretty much like this from the end of May until June 4th, the DN-centers were steadily intensifying all during that period. The prognostic charts made from it also became the basis for postponement of D-day, as we shall see.

The main features of this DN map, Fig. 2, is the zonal, or west-to-east elongations of the DN centers across the Atlantic (actually tilted somewhat from west-southwest to the east-northeast). In the Atlantic there is an east-west moat or band of very below normal heights; it is north of a very much above normal band; both stretch east-west across the Atlantic. (Actually, the height below normal band tiltes from around 50 degrees north latitude at the east coast of North America to 60 degrees north at Norway.) And, note the basic configuration:


A
(Lower Zonal Index than usual)
B
B
(Much higher Zonal Index than usual)
A
Across the Atlantic
Over Europe

In this schematic diagram above, the "A's" represent the central positions of the above-normal patterns; the "B's," the minimum locations of the below normal moat or system in Fig. 2. Notice the reversal in the DN contrast over the Atlantic as compared with eastward into Europe and European Asia: (1) Across that Atlantic a mid-latitude belt of almost straight and very fast energy transport eastward, but coming to an abrupt end in continental Europe. (2) From Nova Scotia to Scotland intense baroclinicity, with deep and intensive meridional gradients of atmospheric temperature and thermal wind. (3) An enormous mass of cold air trapped in the arctic. (4) In the large-scale upper westerlies from the Great Lakes to the Baltic, pronounced hydrodynamic instability, although statically stable at the moment. The situation was excellent for the accumulation of lability energy up to some critical point, then for a rapid conversion into kinetic energy; i.e., into the rapid formation of vigorous cyclonic disturbances and production of storms, to be steered rapidly eastward. On May 31st, this was the predominant weather for the coming five-day period.

Let us now look at Fig. 3, a map of 48-hour change in the 500mb height during the two days following the time of Fig. 2; to June 6th at 00Z, two o'clock on the morning (double daylight saving time) of the actual D-day. Fig. 3 shows three major centers or systems of 48-hour height change and their past two-day tracks. Along their tracks the 12-hourly positions are shown by the encircled crosses. Above each of these positions is written their maximum height-change values in hundreds of feet. The height-change line are drawn at 200′ intervals, being dashed for rise, continuous for fall and heavied for no-change.

Over Finland there is a moderate +400′ height rise center, of relatively less importance for the weather of Overlord operations than the other two systems. Over the Atlantic south of Iceland, the big 48-hour height rise center R originated during 2-4 June in the Baffin Bay as a +200′ rise centered there and followed at half-day intervals with central positions having rises of +200′, +400′, +400′, +500′ and +700′ in 500mb height. In other words, this R-system was intensifying all along. As we shall see presently (Figs 4-6), this R-system heralded the building at about 20 degrees West longitude of a blocking high-pressure ridge that protects the Channel and the assault beaches with the minimal weather conditions needed for the invasion on June 6th.

In the North Sea the all important 48-hour height-fall center F first formed during 2-4 June just southwest of Iceland, very rapidly intensified with in 24 hours and then decreased in intensity; viz., −400′, −800, −1,100′, −900′ and −600′. Of paramount concern to the Overload forecasting of the Channel weather was the approach and resulting proximity of this −600′ system F to the invasion beaches, which are marked in Fig. 3 by the heavied coastal bar. Shortly after midnight on the 5th of June, the center of the F system was located just west of the northern tip of Scotland, where the 500mb height fell over 1,100 feet from that on June 3rd there, a phenominal fall. And during the preceding day from the night of 3-4 June, it had rapidly intensified from its origin southwest of Iceland and rapidly moved south-eastward toward the British Isles. Widewing's forecast that led to cancelling D-day for the 5th of June was supported by the upper-air analyses revealing the initial formation June 3rd of this 500mb height-fall center F southwest of Iceland and by F's LRFD predicted intensification along a path for the next day south-eastward toward England and the Channel. And it turns out that F's decreasing intensity from midnight of June 5th to the 6th—from −1,100′ to −600′, eased the decision for the resumption of forecasted invasion weather for June 6th.

In summary, according to Fig. 3, the last two days, 4-6 June, were thus unlike the preceding six days. Let us now look at the 500mb height departure from normal map at the end of this period.

Fig. 4 is the 500mb height DN map for 6 June at 00Z, 48 hours after Fig. 2. The stagnant circumpolar moat of below normal along the 50 degree north latitude for two days previous (Fig. 2) has given away to two intense below normal centers: minus 1,000′ and minus 800′, separated by two above normal wedges or ridges, especially the one just to the west of the British Isles. From this, we can seek to visualize the vast change in the predominant features of the circulation aloft—from strong zonal westerlies to a sinusoidal flow of large amplitude and short wave length. This is borne out in Fig. 5, a 300mb map for June 4th at 00Z, but showing also, in heavied line, one of the same 300mb contours for 48 hours later, on June 6th.

Beginning on May 28th, the analogue long-range, eight-days ahead forecast from the Directorate of Weather in the Pentagon called for an extension of the Azores high north-eastward toward Ireland by June 5th and thus for protection of the Channel. According to this forecast, the northeast extension of the Azores anticyclone would therefore press the eastward moving Atlantic cyclones farther north, toward Iceland and Norway than they would otherwise go were the Azores high in its normal position, leaving for acceptably good Channel weather. So, storminess was not the question. It was how far to the north the Atlantic storm tracks would go. The speed and intensity of the cyclonic centers would not be important. According to the analogue forecast the formation and cyclogenesis of these storms would be near the Great Lakes in the US, where the upper-air analysis showed that the upper current aloft curved from a southward to an easterly direction; while, their decay and end would be in Scandinavia, where the upper current fanned out and weakened. To this extent, excluding ridge building, Widewing's Upper-air Section lent support to this analogue forecast possibility.

Beginning on May 28th, Widewing's telephone conference forecasts for the channel weather foresaw a badspell on 2 and 3 June, otherwise for an optimistic outlook for the following weekend. The same held for Widewing's forecasts made on Monday and Tuesday, the 29th and 30th of May. But, on Wednesday, May 31st, D-day was five days away, and Widewing's upper-air extended forecast called for a deterioration of the large-scale situation over the weekend of 3-4 June. Although within Widewing this upper-air outlook introduced some apprehension, the analogue projection of the extended Azores high-pressure "finger" west of the Channel continued to form the basis for Widewing's conference forecasts.

The chart sequence in Fig. 6 shows the main features in the surface weather development during the first five plus days of June before D-day. This sequence, which was prepared by Douglas, and its account here are taken from the Sverre Petterssen Memorial Lecture, published in the March 1979 issue of BAMS. In the first chart for June 1st, the polar front is strongest west of C. Both C and D are expected to be fast moving because of very strong westerlies aloft. Trending towards Widewing's analogue long-range forecast valid for June 5th and made May 28th, the Azores high extends east of its normal position and the arctic high is unusually large and pronounced. In the 2 June chart, from which prognoses became available very late that evening, C has become stronger and the Azores high is developing into the Bay of Biscay, nudging into Ireland and thereby continuing to give credence to Widewing's eight-day forecast valid for June 5th. Although cyclogenesis of E is indicated in Eastern US, the analogue forecast still looked like a good bet for 5 June to Widewing's briefing team; and, Stagg didn't disagree. So, by early Friday, June 3rd, the invasion ships in the northern ports had already been set in motion for D-day on June 5th. Based on Widewing's long-range forecast the assault on the German occupation of Western Europe was underway.

But, in the chart for 3 June in Fig. 6, there is an equatorward extension of extensive polar air over Baffin Bay. The storm activity is strengthening over the Atlantic, and the earlier ridging of the Azores high toward Ireland and the Channel is now receding southward. Made May 28th, and those made thereafter, Widewing's original analogue long–range forecasts were now in jeopardy. In the 5:00 p.m. conference of June 3rd, Stagg nevertheless continued to hold invasion possibilities open for 5 June. At 11:00 p.m., Widewing made a special telephone call to Dunstable to discuss the critical situation. In its forecast efforts at Widewing, it became quite obvious that the cold front of the surface low C, which aloft was associated with the rapidly deepening system F of Fig. 3, would likely tranverse the British Isles on the night of the 4th and the Channel during the early morning of the 5th, resulting there in up to Beaufort force six winds from the west-southwest and an overcast with 500-foot ceilings. Finally, the 3:00 a.m. meteorological conference on Saturday June 4th agreed on non-operational weather for June 5th's D-day. At 4:15 a.m. on Saturday, June 4th, Stagg briefed in the Portsmouth Library. Admiral Creasy, RN, called him, "Six-feet-two of Stagg and six-feet-one of gloom." The operation was stopped, forces underway arrested and put in a holding position where ever they were. Overlord was postponed.

In Fig. 6, the evening chart for 4 June features E's enlargement and the joint development of C and D to form F. This surface low continues in its approach toward the northern tip of Scotland until shortly after the time of this chart, at 0400 on the 5th, the observed sea-level pressure fell to 976.8 mb at Wick. Up until then, according to Douglas, this was the lowest June pressure of this century in the British Isles. The central position of this surface low F corresponds to a geographical position in Fig. 3 halfway along the track between the −1,100′ and −900′ centers of the 500mb height fall F-system in Fig. 3. Of special interest, this evening chart for 4 June verifies the strong winds that had been forecast for the cancelled June 5th landing.

The final briefing conference to the Supreme Commander was scheduled for 4:15 a.m., June 5th; and, the supporting meteorological discussion took place at 3:00 a.m. From the evening chart of June 4th in Fig. 6, there was agreement among Dunstable, Admiralty and Widewing that the cold front, which had made a June 5th landing impossible, would on June 6th pass well southward into France, temporarily giving the Channel area clearing skies and abating winds. In addition the conference agreed with Widewing that behind this cold front the blocking ridge west of the British Isles, as seen in Figs 3–5, would continue rapidly to develop and move slowly eastward to the Channel area. Following after the first landings, this fair weather, high pressure ridge would provide at least a day of reasonably quite weather for the post D-day build-up, for which SHAEF, however, had earlier specified the need for a period of 10 such days. But, in the 3:00 a.m. met. discussion that need could not be met in its forecast weather outlook. As a matter of fact, as it did later turn out, the next front did pass across the invasion area early Thursday, or June 9th. The weathermen recognized their mutual concern for watching just how storm F, Fig. 6, would progress. But, in all instances, it was agreed that there would be a period of improved weather between the two storms F and E in the June 4th chart of Fig. 6.

In the library at Portsmouth, while overhead a howling storm tore across the British Isles, the Channel and Northern France, Stagg was glad to be able to reveal that the only change since the last forecast was for the better and forecast an interval of clearing over southern England, which would probably last well over 24 hours and into Wednesday afternoon, June 7th. And, at Widewing, I can remember Irv Krick standing beside my weather map table, at 6:15 a.m. on that morning of June 6th and quietly saying, as if to himself, "Boy, was that ever a horseshoe!"

Shortly after the first landing took place, the morning chart of 6 June in Fig. 6 shows a Channel situation developing between these storms F and E. Much later in 1967 (in the RMS Quart. J., no. 398, p. 413), Robinson imagines a state of affairs in which the south-southeastward moving storm F in the June 6th chart of Fig. 6, now a 998mb low, were displaced just a short distance (200 km) farther south in the North Sea than it was, or in which it hadn't filled as rapidly as it did (it had filled 25 mb in the previous 36 hours). At the invasion beaches, the resulting winds would have been catastrophic for Overlord. As it turned out, on the western beaches the conditions were good. But, on the eastern invasion beaches at the time of the initial landings, the onshore westerlies just did exceed force 3, the strongest deemed acceptable in the planning of Overlord. Later in the invasion day of June 6th, the beach-head winds did actually reach force 5 as the back-bent trough of F passed south-eastward over the Channel. So, barely adequate weather made possible the setting of the invasion into operation on the 6th after a 24-hour postponement.

From a military as well as from a meteorological viewpoint, although the postponement of D-day was a controlling factor for success in the invasion, it was not the determinant factor for its success. In having set the sluggish invasion armada in motion, Widewing's optimistic long-range forecast, when later refined with short-term forecasting, timed the invasion successfully and with an overwhelming essence of surprise to the enemy. In the long range, Widewing's unreserved optimism had prevailed over Dunstable's absolutely black view, which in the short range proved to be correct.

The German Command could not conceive in any way that the Allies could accomplish, in the interlude of just 24 hours between storms, the four-day pre-invasion assembling and positioning of the invasion forces. This came to light in the interrogation of General Richard Habermehl by Widewing forecasters. Dr. Richard Habermehl, a Luftwaffe general, was Chief of the German Weather Service through 1939–1944. During the later period 1944–1968, some of us had a number of associations with Dr. Habermehl. Captured and interrogated before the end of WWII, he revealed details of the D-day weather forecast that had decisive consequences as to the success of the Allied invasion. Later, he was invited to lecture on different occasions to the USAF cadets at the AF Academy on meteorology, weather forecasting and military operations. His daughter Ruth lives in Security, a suburb of Colorado Springs, near the AF Academy; Virgil Poe, her husband, now a building contractor, was then a Panzer Division Commander, captured in 1943 in the Ukraine. For many years after the war, Dr. Habermehl, who lived just outside Neustadt in Germany, raised and trained jumping horses.

The German Weather Service had found May finely suited for invasion weather. The total number of dawn alerts which therefore were ordered at one spot or another was well nigh astronomic. The strain on the men, who were already carrying out training exercises and building defenses at high pressure, was considerable, possibly even excessive. During June 4-6, General Habermehl forecast the weather situation to be unfavorable for a landing on the Normandy coast, an opinion which was shared by the German naval experts. The Commander of the German Seventh Army, Colonel General Dollman, therefore, ordered a temporary relaxation of alert conditions and summoned his senior officers to Rennes on the 5th day for a two-day map exercise.

With General Habermehl, Lieutenant General Bodo Zimmerman, Operations Officer of OB West, later told us from Widewing of their first intimation of the Allied invasion:

"At about 2115 hours, or a quarter-past nine in the evening of June 5th, I was in our officers' mess at St. Germain when the Chief Intelligence Officer on the staff of CIC West came to look for me. He was in a state of high excitement, for his people had just decoded a British wireless message. It was the habit of the Allies to communicate with their many agents in the West by radio and, not infrequently, our experts succeeded in decoding these apparently harmless signals. This, however, was a signal of a very different type, for it ordered the mobilization of the entire French resistance movement for the coming night. This could have only one meaning: the invasion was about to begin." (See para. 99, p. 71, Ch. 7, MX #B-308, vol. 1, EUCOM:HD:OHGB:File-DA, 1948.)

It turned out that the 4-5 June storm F of Fig. 6, which grounded the Luftwaffe reconnaissance and harbored the German naval patrol boats, prevented the enemy from spotting the assembling of the Allied invasion armada for its aborted assault on 5 June. Remarkably, this British signal Monday night to the French Underground was the first sign to the enemy that the invasion was just a few hours away.

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was on his way back from Obersalzburg, where he had been to see Hitler and was not expected to arrive before the following afternoon (June 6th). And Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, Commander of the whole German West Wall, had gone to Berlin to his wife's birthday with a pair of ladies shoes from Paris.

Thus, it is our strong belief that finds merit in the optimism of the American long-range forecast for the invasion, albeit it was not altogether a correct forecast in all its many respects. It is the reasoning that says the invasion, because of the incorrectly forecast weather in the long range, was successful; because, it caught the Germans off-guard.

Before D-day, Widewing also foresaw continued worsening weather for some weeks, if the opportunity of 5-6 June were passed up. When Stagg's memo analyzing the terrible weather of the next possible invasion period after D-day, June 17 to 21, was shown to General Eisenhower, he wrote this comment: "Thanks, and thank the gods of war that we went when we did." As it was, the four-day storm, June 18, to 21, did smash up the artificial harbors, and set back the tempo of the invasion by weeks. In retrospect, in 1944, May turned out better than June, which was worse than July. And, one would have had to go back to the end of the last century to have found a June as bad as the one in 1944.

A little after the invasion, I went with Widewing Advance to Granville-sur-la-Mer, on the Cherbourg Peninsula in Normandy, where we set up our weather shop in a barn and a former German barracks. Back at Bushy Park. Maj. Jay Treat, who was responsible for security matters, decided to burn and destroy all the weather map analyses and upper-air prognostic charts, including those for the Overlord period. We thus lost original records of our prognostic efforts. Ben Holzman, who went along with Widewing Advance (Irv Krick at first stayed back at Bushy Park) somehow retained his notes of the Overlord telephone conferences. These conferences had been partly recorded on a Telefunkon wire recorder, received earlier from a visit made to the German weather station in Ireland. From Normandy we ended up at the Ecole Normale in St. Germain en Laye, outside of Paris, the same buildings previously occupied by Lt. Gen. Zimmermann and Genfldm. von Rundstedt, where we stayed for the remainder of the war. Eight of us from Widewing were billeted nearby at 8 Rue de Lorraine, Genfldm. von Rundstedt's residence, where we had the same French maid who had also served him. And in the drawer of his bedstand, I found a postcard in his hand, "If I only had . . ."

A week after D-day, J. M. Stagg wrote to the Director, U.S. Weather Services, USSTAF: "Now that the first and most important meterological decision related to the Allied assaults on Western Europe has been made, I would like to express through you my gratitude for the help given me by the Staff of the USSTAF Forecasting Central and particularly for the contributions to the advice given to the Supreme Commander made by Colonels Holzman and Krick and Captain Bundgaard."

In this letter to Yates, Stagg goes on to say: "Which Central's advice was soundest, it would be invidious and unhelpful to try to decide. In my view no one Central was altogether right; each one contributed his share to the advice presented to the Supreme Commander." (From SHAEF, a letter signed by J. M. Stagg and dated 12 June 1944.)

What Stagg seems to say here with grace is that nothing is to be gained through a post mortem re-hash as to which Central was right or wrong. All that matters is that, through an admittedly cumbersome joint weather organization, the Overlord weather forecasts were adequate and met the test.

But on the same day Stagg also wrote another letter to Sir Nelson Johnson, the Director of UK's Meteorological Office, where Stagg was being employed as the second person in authority under Sir Nelson and from which he'd been given a leave of absence for his half-year assignment as Eisenhower's Chief Meteorological Officer in SHAEF. This letter to Sir Nelson starts out in verbatim fashion with the one of the same date to Yates, suggesting that both were form letters written at the same time. But, inexplicably, Stagg goes on in this letter to Sir Nelson with the following evaluation:

". . . there was but little or no agreement in the forecast advice offered separately by the three forecast centers.

"It was then that the fine combination of true insight and long experience behind Mr. Douglas and Dr. Petterssen showed up against all the text book analyses and arguments.

"Insofar as the best advice was actually given to the Supreme Commander at the most critical times, that advice was based on Dunstable's views; it would not be exaggeration to say that their views were either actively opposed or only half-heartedly accepted by the other participants on the meteorological conference even at the most crucial times." (From the Meteorological Section, SHAEF, a letter signed by J. M. Stagg, dated 12 June 1944 and addressed to Sir Nelson Johnson. This letter is reproduced on p. 241 f. of Petterssen's book "Kuling fra Nord," published in Oslo, 1974.)

Couched with gracless dispersions as to the collaborative character of his Admniralty and Widewing colleagues, what Stagg sets forth here is that it is not invidious or "unhelpful" to tell his superior Sir Nelson that their Dunstable forecasts for Overlord were the soundest. Considering both Stagg's letters together, one must conclude that, as a consideration reflecting with the least discredit upon him, he indeed must have felt that Dunstable did the best job, but, because presumably of an ongoing demeanour of propriety, he was simply unable to take it upon himself to tell that to the Americans.

Stagg closes this letter to Sir Nelson, "Whatever other results their (i.e., Douglas and Petterssen's) participation in the conference have had on the success of the assault in Normandy in June, 1944, they have clearly vindicated their earlier contentions that except in unusual situations forecasting in this country for even 12 hours ahead is still a job requiring the utmost skill, caution and experience."

When people do such wonderful things as was done by all on D-day, it is hard to know how to express one's gratitude. Words always seem so inadequate, but that's all I have for this occasion. And, so I would like to mention those at Widewing that contributed to the success of the invasion, what Sverre Petterssen has called "Meteorology's Finest Hour." They are: Col. Donald N. Yates, L/C's Irving P. Krick, Benjamin P. Holzman, Majors Jay Jerry Treat, Edward O. Smith, John J. Jones, R. G. Bounds Jr., Captains Donald W. Roberts, Olav Njus, Donald T. Perkins, Thomas P. Wildman, William H. Wyatt, Rodney A. Jones, William L. Reeves, Harold L. Herzog, First Lieutenants Morrison H. Beach, Lloyd L. Falk, Arthur W. Wakeling, Clyde R. King, Joel M. Ginsberg, Kenneth C. Winslow, Frank Q. Ward, Edgar H. Fickensher, William D. Cooke, CWO Lycurgis G. Tsimpides, Sergeants John D. MacDonald, Bert Vance, Fred Bedleyon, Willie Altman, Zucherman, Ed. M. Doherty, Albert Simonson, Aragon, and Wilder.

In these four decades since Normandy, many of these colleagues have died, some have gone on to different and perhaps greater things. One became rated as one of the eight alltime best American chessmen. Another, the Chairman of the Board for the Travelers Insurance Company, one a Nobel prize recipient, another a house representative, another a district judge, another a chief sanitation engineer for the City of New Jersey, one the founder and editor of the Reporter Magazine, a number of university professors. And, what a day this has been.

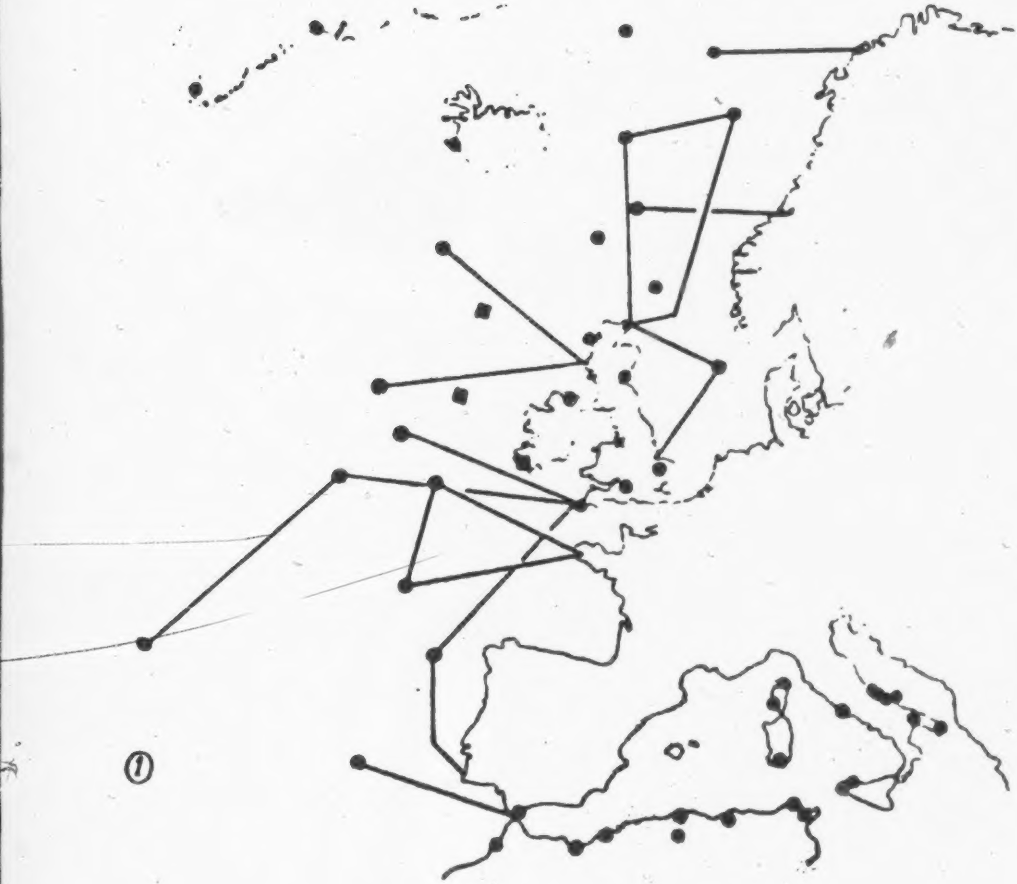


FIGURE 1

Location of Upper-air Stations and Aircraft Weather Reconnaissance Tracks at the Time of Overlord, 1944

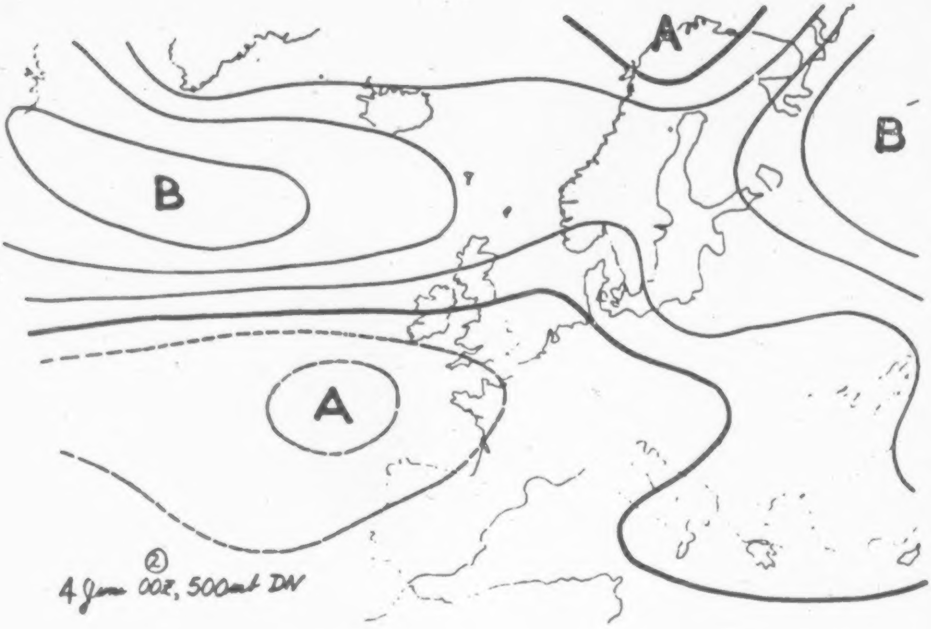

A
B
B
A
②
4 June 00Z, 500mb DN

FIGURE 2

500mb Height Departure from Normal Map for 00Z, 4 June 1944

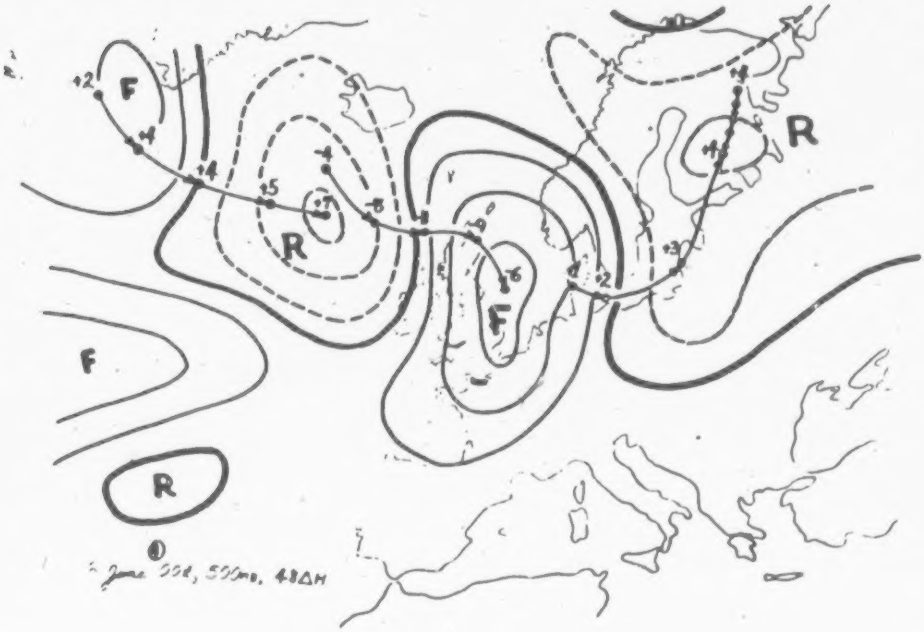

+2
F
+4
+4
+5
-4
+7
R
-8
-9
-6
F
+2
+3
+4
R
F
R
6 June 00Z, 500mb, 48ΔH

FIGURE 3

The 48-hour Change in 500mb Height for 00Z, 6 June 1944

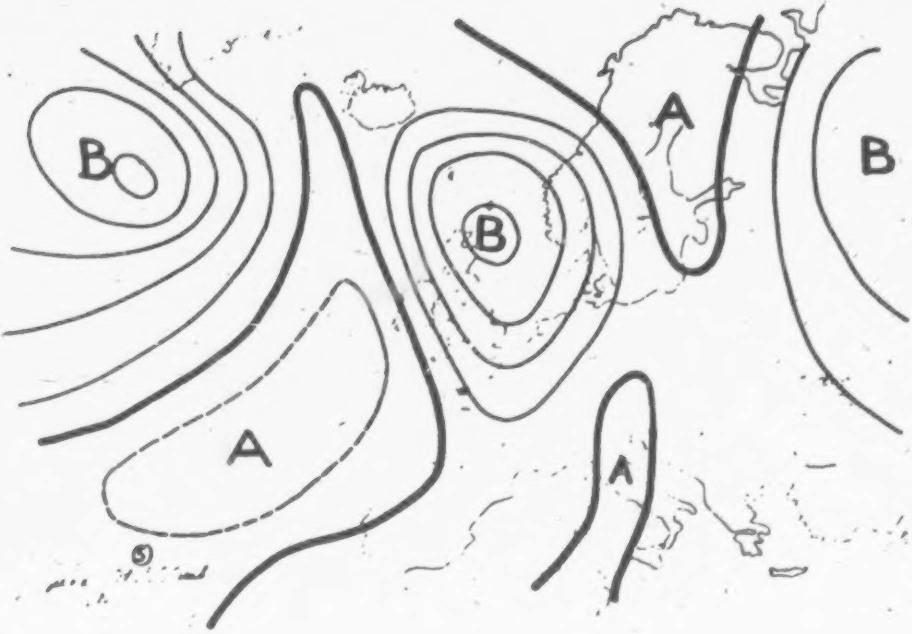


FIGURE 4

500mb Height Departure from Normal Map for 00Z, 6 June 1944

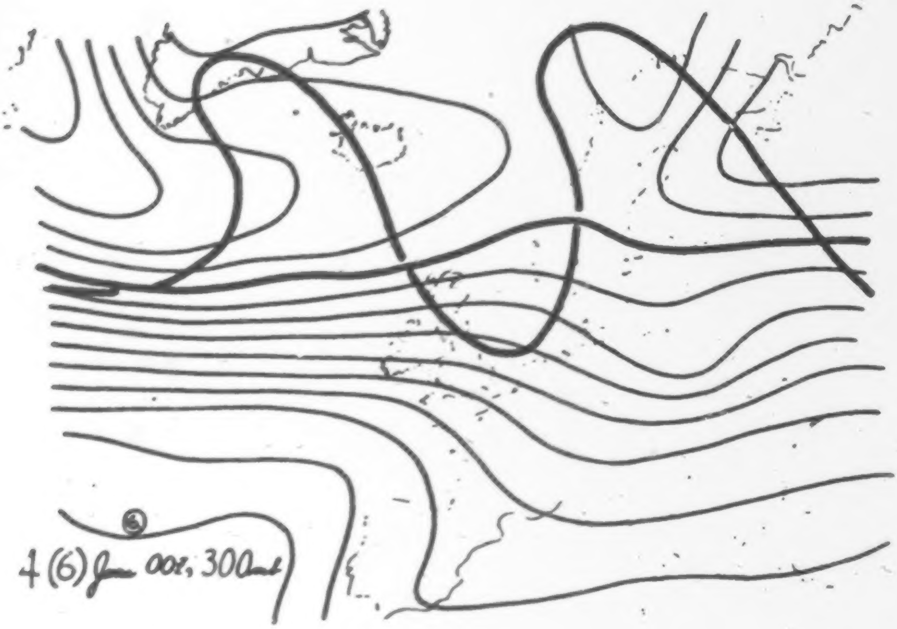
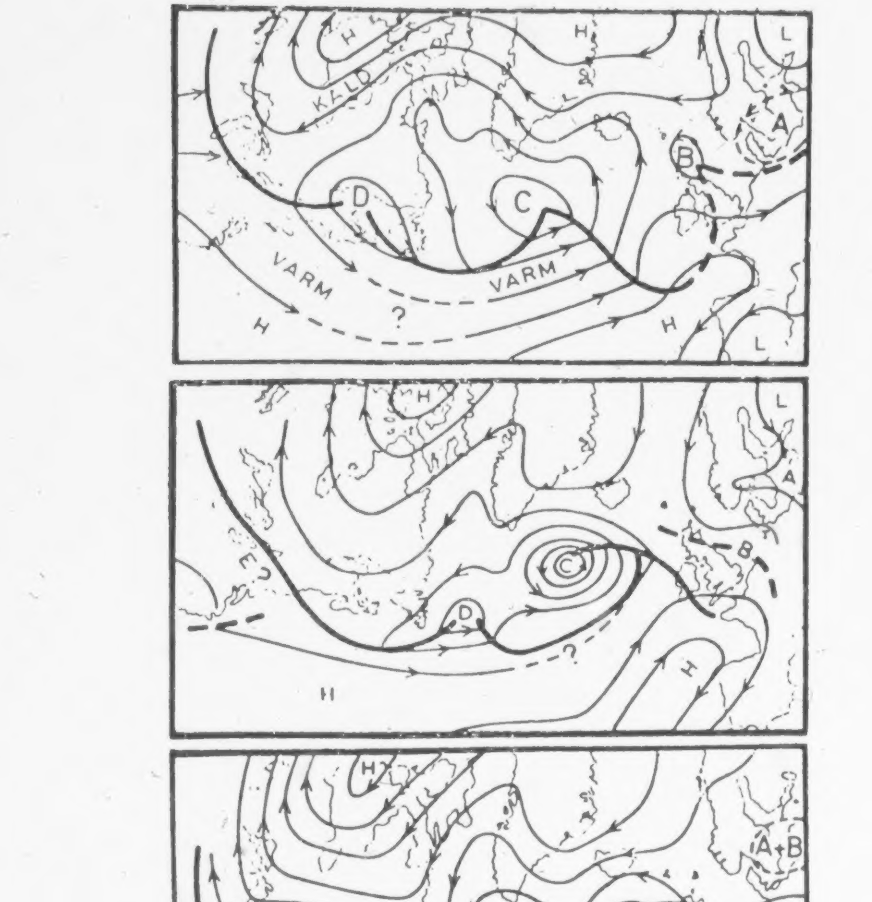

⑥
4 (6) June 00z, 300mb

FIGURE 5

300mb Contour Map for 00Z, 4 June 1944, with a Selected Contour Superimposed from the 00Z, 6 June 1944 Map.


H
H
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VARM
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L

Fig. 6 Prepared by Sverre Petterssen, a chart sequence showing the main features in the weather development during the first days of June 1944 before D-day. The charts for 1, 2, and 3 June are at 1300 GMT; while the chart for 4 June is at 1800 GMT; the chart for 6 June, at 0700 GMT, is shortly after the time when the first landing took place.